

A N
E X P O S I T I O N

W I T H

Practiſall Observations;
CONTINUED

Upon the Eleventh, Twelfth, Thirteenth and
Fourteenth Chapters of the Book of

J O B.

Being the ſumme of XXXV. Lectures, deli-
vered at *Magnus* near the Bridge, *London*.

By JOSEPH CARYL Preacher of the Word, and
Pastor of the Congregation there. 4

HEBREWS Chap. 12. Verſ. 7, 11.

*If ye endure chaſtening, God dealeth with you as with ſons, for
what ſon is he whom the father chaſteneth not?*

*Now no chaſtening for the preſent ſeemeth to be joyous but grievous:
Nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righte-
ouſneſs, to them which are exerciſed therein.*

L O N D O N,

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TO THE
CHRISTIAN READER

To those chiefly of this City, who have
been the movers, and continue the
promoters of this WORK.

Sirs,

IN this fourth part I present you with
Jobs third dispute: Eliphaz and Bil-
dad having given their judgement up-
on his case, Zophar undertakes him:
how he managed his arguments, and what
answer he received, are (according to the
measure of received light) discovered in
this expository discourse; I shall here only (by way of pre-
face) propose a question and offer my apprehensions towards
the resolution of it.

Whether Job and his friends, who were the interlo-
cutors at this conference, spake (as the holy Prophets
and other penmen of the Scriptures did) by inspiration
of God 1 Tim. 3. 16. or, as they were moved by the
Holy Ghost, 2 Pet. 1. 21.)

That the book of Job is a part (as the Apostle phraseth it,
Rom. 15. 4.) of those things, which were written afore-
time for our learning, that we through patience, and
comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope: is testified
not only by the divine grandeur and majesty of the stile, toge-

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ther with the intrinsecal excellency and efficacy of the matter, (in both which it declares it self a glorious beam of his wisdom, who is light and the father of lights) but also by the concurrant Testimony of, not a few, other Scriptures.

For, as the History of it (that such a man was) hath a full Prophetical testimony by Ezekiel (chap. 14. 14.) and an Apostolical one by S. James (chap. 5. 11.) Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord: So the Authenticy and Authority of it is clearly asserted by S. Paul, calling in and associating the Testimony of this Book with Davids Psalms, to that great truth, that, The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.

For, Though it doth not argue a Book purely divine, because some sentence of it is quoted in Scripture (for so the Books of Aratus, Menander and Epimenides Heat hen Poets are) yet such a manner of quotation as the Book of Iob is honoured with, is an undoubted argument of it. While Paul quotes the writings of the Heathen, he slights those Heathen writers, with, As certain also of your own Poets have said, for we are also his of-spring, Act. 17. 28. And again, One of themselves, even a Prophet of their own, said, The Cretians are always lyars, evil beasts, slow-bellies, Tit. 1. 12. He makes use of what another of them said, without saying any thing at all of him, Evill communications corrupt good manners (1 Cor. 15. 33.) But when he cites this Book, he doth in the same form wherein most of the books of the old Testament are cited in the new, giving his citation the value of a reason, in reference to the point he was upon, with an emphatical causal particle, For it is written, he taketh the wife in their own craftinesse, 1 Cor. 3. 19. which are the words of Eliphaz in the 5th. chapter of this Book, ver. 13. Now, as when God took the first-fruits, he consecrated and sanctified the whole kind of which those first-fruits were a part, so where he takes any part of a Book as an authoritative Scripture proof, he confirms that whole Book for Scripture.

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And as this Book is there authoritatively cited by the Apostle Paul, so divers sentences and branches of it are transplanted and engrafted by the penmen of other Scriptures into the body of those Scriptures which God appointed and called them to pen: The 5 verse of the 8. Psalm, and the 3 verse of the 144. Psalm, Lord, what is man that thou takest knowledge of him, or the son of man that thou makest account of him, are fully the same in sense, and near the same in the letter with that of Job in his 7 chapter at the 17 verse: And the comparison of man to a shadow, (Psal. 144. 4.) seems to be transcribed from the words of Bildad, chap. 8. vers. 8. That also of the 107 Psalm, v. 4. He powreth contempt upon Princes, and causeth them to wander in a wilderness where there is no way, fell first from the mouth of Iob, chap. 12. vers. 21. 24. And the words of the forty second verse in the same Psalm, The righteous shall see it and rejoice, and iniquity shall stop her mouth, were spoken by Eliphaz. in Job 5. 16. and 22. 19. The like observations may be made between Lev. 26. 5. and Iob. 11. 19, between Deut. 10. 17. and Iob. 34. 19. between Psal. 7. 15. and Isa. 59. 15. compared with Iob. 15. 35. Now, as the calling out of some one sentence of this Book for a Scripture proof, so the frequent mixing of the language and phrase of it in the Scripture, is a convincing argument that the whole Book is of God.

But doth not Iob charge his friends as forgers of lies? chap. 13. 4. if they were so indeed, how can we assert their discourses for divine truths? For no lie is of the truth, 1 Joh. 2. 21. If they were not, how can we assert the discourse of Iob for truth, who was thus mistaken? I answer.

First, Iob spake rather passionately then positively.

Secondly, The lies he charged them with, were not erroneous assertions against the truth, but unkind aspersions (flowing from a zeal for God) upon his person.

Thirdly, Iob doth not charge his friends with lies strictly
A 2 taken,

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taken, as if they had knowingly spoken any thing which was false, or as if they had spoken at any time purposely to ensnare him: his friends supposed and were confident that they spake truth not only in it self (as indeed they did) but also to his state, and their aim was to instruct or reclaim him, not to ensnare or entangle him by what they had spoken.

Lastly, They spake no doctrinal untruths though some of their applications were (as to his case) untrue.

And thus even the Apostles themselves did fail sometimes: For as Jobs friends applied their doctrine to a Saint, as if he had been an hypocrite, so did they in their Epistolical writings apply their doctrines to some hypocrites as if they had been Saints.

But doth not God himself in the conclusion and determination of this dispute say expressly to Eliphaz the Temarite, My wrath is kindled against thee and against thy two friends, for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right as my servant Job hath (chap. 42. 7) If they did not speak right of God, how then were they taught of God what to speak I answer.

First, Some expound those words (as the letter also seems to carry it) comparatively, not as if they had not spoken right of God, but not so right as Job had.

Secondly, That which they spake of God in his nature, properties and works was all right, only they had not spoken right of God, about the intendment of his works and dispensations towards Job: They did not hit the meaning of God in that so clearly as Job did; Though (I conceive) Job himself was much in the dark about that point too, as Elihu laboured to convince him.

It may be again objected, That Job and his three friends oppose each other, and maintain different opinions, how then can all be true? Must not one side be out, he or they?

I answer. First, Job and his friends did agree in many points (as was shewed in the Preface to the second part of these Expositions) And all those principles wherein they agreed are the

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the undoubted truths of God. I know it to be so of a truth (saith he chap. 9. 2.) And again, My eye hath seen all this, mine ear hath heard and understood it, chap. 13. 1. In both these passages Job votes with his friends and seals to the truth of many things which they had spoken; as if he had said though I cannot agree with you in all, yet I will agree as far as I can: In these points you and I have no quarrel.

Secondly, where they disagreed, the difference was not thus wide, that his friends maintain'd an error and he a truth, but only thus, he maintained more truth, or truth more clearly then they did. They taught truth in all they spake, but not all the truth. As for instance, That God afflicts for sin, or, that sin is the cause of affliction, is a truth, but not all the truth, or not absolutely and universally true, for some afflictions are not sent for chastening and correction, but meerly for triall and probation: Again they teach, that God doth severely punish wicked men in this life. This is true, but not universally and absolutely true, for, as some godly men are troubled, so some wicked men prosper all their daies.

Thirdly, Though the opinion which Jobs friends held in opposition to him, was not throughout sound and Orthodox, yet their way of expressing it was. Remember, I pray thee (saith Eliphaz cha. 4. 7. Who ever perished being innocent; or where were the righteous cut off? Here Job opposed him, chap. 9. 22. This is one thing, therefore I said it, he destroyeth the perfect and the wicked. Eliphaz guided by the experience of Gods usuall administrations in those times, held that God doth not greatly afflict (for that he means by perishing and cutting off) any godly man in this life. This was his mistake yet the words with which this opinion is cloathed contain a clear truth: And being an appeal to experience (Remember I pray thee) are very parallel to that of David, (Psa. 37. 25.) I have been young, and now am old, yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.

Fourthly, Jobs friends spake truth in Thesis, or in the positi-

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on all along, they only failed in Hypothesi, or in the application: yea all their applications and inferences might have fitted some men in such an outward condition as they saw Iob in, but they did not fit Iob, because his inward condition was not such as they censured it to be: and God left them under those misapprehensions of his inward condition, for the promoting of his own holy design in the full trial of Jobs patience, while his friends wounded him deeper by these continual reflections upon his spiritual condition, than Satan or the Sabeans did by the breaches and irruptions which they made upon his outward condition.

But doth it not abate the Divine Authority of this Book, if any thing in it be unduly stated and applied?

The Scripture reports many things, even of those who wrote or spoke it Historically, which are against the Scripture Doctrinally. All that Moses spake was not right, for he once spake unadvisedly with his lips (Ps. 106. 33.) And so did David, when he said in his haste all men are liars, Ps. 106. 11. And again (Ps. 73. 13.) Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency. The Prophet Jeremy doth not only write a curse upon his birth-day, but he curses the man who brought tidings to his father, saying, a man-child is born (Jer. 20. 14, 15.) Jonah prayed, take my life from me, when he saw that God spared the lives of the Ninevites: He also was angry for the death of a gourd, and said, I do well to be angry even unto death (Jon. 4. 3, 9.) These things are written in Scripture for our caution, not for our imitation: And they are discoveries, not of the wisdom and holinesse of God, but of the folly and sinfulness of man. Some such sad discoveries Job made in this Book, and some such his friends made.

But if some passages in this Book discover the weakness and mistakes of the speakers, how can we raise doctrines and observations from them?

Every speech and passage which the infinite wisdom of God
thath

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hath thought fit to put into this or any other Book of Scripture, hath in it somewhat for our instruction. That blasphemy of the fool which contradicts not only the truth but the very being of God (Psal, 14. 1.) The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God, teacheth us this divine truth, That there are seven (that is, all manner of) abominations in the heart of man. We may draw useful instructions from the words of Judas the Traitor, after Satan had entred into him and filled his heart; yea from the words of Satan in his temptations and proposals unto Christ: much more may we from the sayings of holy men, which are true for the matter (as all the sayings of Iob and his friends are) though there be a failing in the manner of speaking, or in their references to a particular case.

Nor is it unsafe to affirm, that even such sayings are from the inspiration of God, which have an infallible truth in them, though they who said so did not understand them so. When the chief Priest and Pharisees sate in Councel, and debated the destruction of Christ the Saviour of the world, fearing the Romanes would destroy them, and take away both their name and nation, Caiphas who was high-priest that same year said unto them, ye know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient that one man die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. Ioh. 11. 40, 50. This was wicked and bloody counsel, according to his intentment and meaning in giving it, (for we must not condemn the innocent, though but one man, upon politick respects to preserve the greatest multitude or a whole nation of men) yet there was a great truth of God in it, even the summe and substance of the whole Gospel; For it was not only expedient but also necessary, that one man (Jesus Christ the only Sonne of God) should be put to death, that the whole nation of the Jews, and all the Gentile nations might not perish eternally. Thus the Evangelist explains the cruell advice of Caiphas in the next words, v. 51. 52. This he spake not of himself, but being high-priest that year,
he

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he prophesied that Christ should die for that nation, and not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad. This sense was far from the heart of Caiphaz, though the words which bear it were uttered with his tongue. And thus if we (in some places) pass by the particular meaning of the speakers, and keep to the general meaning of what is spoken, we may make a savoury and an edifying construction of every passage in this Book: in which as there are abundance of holy truths and as it were a compendium both of Law and Gospel, so (upon this account) there is no one sentence in opposing any one truth contained and held forth in either. And therefore from all these premises I conclude the question first proposed affirmatively, That Job and his friends spake by the inspiration of God, or as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

I shall not entertain the Reader any longer at the door or in the entry of the book: but commending this brief exercitation with the following expositions to the blessing of God, for a fruitful improvement of these and all other helps, which his gracious bounty continues or renews upon us for the furtherance of our faith and knowledge in, and of our obedience to the whole mystery of his will revealed in his word, I subscribe my self

March 20.
1648.

Your affectionate Friend,

to love and serve you in the Lord,

Joseph Caryl.



A N
E X P O S I T I O N
W I T H
Practicall Observations;
CONTINUED
Upon the Eleventh, Twelfth, Thirteenth and
Fourteenth Chapters of the Book of
J O B.

J O B Chap. 11. vers. 1, 2, 3.

*Then answered Zophar the Naamathite, and said,
Should not the multitude of words be answered? and should
a man full of talk be justified?
Should thy lies make men hold their peace? and when thou
mockest, shall no man make thee ashamed?*



O B hath already stood two charges; the first Sophar senat
from Eliphaz, the second from Bildad. Here a idem quod spe-
third begins, culator, & Na-

Then answered Zophar the Naamathite, and said. amathites pul-
chram & ju-
cundum. Greg.

Who Zophar was, hath been shewed at the Phil.
11th verse of the second Chapter. His name Zophar imports a
B Watchman,

Watchman, and his additionall title *Naamathite*, pleasant or beautifull in the originall.

The matter of his answer may be considered;

First, In the Preface.

Secondly, In the body of it.

The exordium or preface is contained in the three first verses. The body of his answer in the following parts of the Chapter: wherein three things are clear;

1. A generall proposition, containing the matter in debate, or the position which *Zophar* puts upon *Job*, as his, and takes upon himself to confute, as erroneous. This he layes down in the 4th verse, *Thou hast said, My doctrine is pure, and I am clear in thine eyes.*

2. We have the confutation of this position enlarged, from the 5. verse to the 12.

3. *Zophar* having shewed *Job* his error, and, as he hoped, convinced him of it, proceeds to give him counsell, and closeth the Chapter with instruction. He insisteth in the same method and treads the same path that *Eliphaz* and *Bildad* had done before; first, chiding and reproving *Job*, then counselling and advising him.

Zophars preface presents us with a three-fold necessity, engaging him to this reply.

*Quod verbosus
ad fucandam
malam cau-
sam.*

First, From that multitude of words which *Job* had already heaped together for the colouring (as he judged it) of a bad cause, verse 2. *Should not the multitude of words be answered? and should a man full of talk be justified? Is it not high time that I should speak a little, when thou hast had time to speak so much?*

*Quod mendax
ad obstinate
ruendam ma-
lam causam.*

Secondly, He argues this necessity from the falsity of what *Job* had spoken, in the first clause of the third verse, *Should thy lies make men hold their peace? It is thy sinne, that thou hast spoken lies, and it would be mine, if I should not speak against them.*

*Quod irrisor
ad contemnan-
das veras ad-
monitiones il-
ludendumque
Deo & homini-
bus.*

Thirdly, from the scorn and levity of spirit, which *Zophar* supposed he saw frothing at the lips of *Job*, *When thou mockest, shall no man make thee ashamed? It were the shame of all men, if none should. Thou art sitting in the scorners chair, Shall I be afraid to raise thee up, or pull thee down?*

So then, The preface may be formed up into this Argument;

Many words, and thoſe full of lies and ſcorn muſt be undertaken and answered; no man can or ought to hold his peace, when he heareth ſuch diſcourſes;

But thy answer is full of words, and as full of lies and ſcorn: *Paulo amarul-
lentius agit &
aculeatus.*

Therefore I muſt undertake thee, I muſt answer.

Thus Zophar preſſeth upon his friend with violence, if not with virulence and ſowerneſſe of ſpirit: handling him more roughly, and pouring more gall and vinegar into his wounds, then his former Antagoniſts had done. As his ſpirit grew warmer, ſo did his words; and in heat of arguing, he comes very near unto reviling. *Coc.
Zophar Jobum
reprehendit a-
crius quam
ceteri incaleſ-
cente ut fit in
certamine an-
imo, ita ut à
convitiis non
abſtineat. Merl.*

Verſe 2. Should not the multitude of words be answered?

The multitude of words.] Zophar taxeth Job, as over-copious in language, as a man given to talk, and affecting to hear himſelf ſpeak. Eloquence of ſpeech, or elocution, is an excellent gift of God; but verboſity, and a love to flow out continually at the tongue, is the vanity of man: at once, a ſin in the ſpeaker, and a burden to the hearers. Paul was taxed for this at Athens, Act. 17. *ὁ περισσολόγιος* The Athenians were the great wits of the world, maſters of eloquence, and when Paul came amongſt them, they encountered him, and ſome ſaid, What will this babler, this ſower of words ſay? *πολλὰ τὸ λέγειν* verſ. 18. So ſome give the notation of the Greek word, though others, with better reaſon, take it, as an alluſion to little birds, which pick up the ſeed ſown, and being of no great uſe, either for meat or muſick, are yet troubleſome enough with unceſſant, immelo-*διος* chirpings. Such an one thoſe Philoſophers cenſured Paul, This man ſpeaks many words, but he makes no muſick, no ear is taken with him, nor underſtanding enriched by him. Though all we *quæ neque
magnopere ſunt
eſui, neque
cantu delectant;* ſpeak is in words, yet we muſt ſpeak more then words. *ſed garritu per-
petuo ſunt mo-
leſti. Beza.*

I ſhall lay down five particulars, whereby we may diſcern, when multitude of words are ſinfull, or when there is a multitude of ſins in a multitude of words: It is poſſible to ſpeak many words, and all few enough, and no ſin at all in them. They are ſinfull,

1. When words are unprofitable, light, vain, frothy; words that have no nourishment in them: for as meat is to the palate, ſo are words to the ear, to the underſtanding. Words are the bread of the minde. Some words are nothing but winde, there's

no food, no tack in them; you cannot pick one good bit out of a whole discourse. He that hath spoken one such word hath spoken too many: how much more when a multitude of them are spoken together? As it shews the noblenesse of action, to do what is worthy to be spoken of, so of elocution to speak what is whothy to be done.

2. When words are beside the matter, beside the businesse in hand; when we shoot our arrows not eying the mark, arrow after arrow, and all from the mark, this is reprovab. If we speak not to the point, we speak to no purpose. Be clear to that, and the fewest words, will make the fullest answer. Be off from that, and many words make not a word of answer.

3. When there is but a little matter in a great many words, when plenty of words have a scarcity, a dearth of matter in them. Some contract (as it were) the spirits of a point into a few words, and can give you much in a little, a large matter in a narrow compasse. This is an excellent skill, though not always fit: because all are not able to apprehend what is couched and drawn up so close together; all are not able to drink spirits, but must have them infused into, and incorporated with larger discourses, and particular demonstrations. They must have line upon line, and precept upon precept, that is a multitude of lines and precepts. Yet matterlesse words are reprovab, how many soever they be, and the more they be, the more reprovab they are, *Shall not such a multitude of words be reprov'd?*

4. A multitude of words are tinsull, when they are affected; when a man delights to speak much; A man may be that to himself, which *Ezekiel* was to his hearers, as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument (*Ezek. 33. 32.*) Such will speak often and long, not that they care to profit others, but for their own applause, or to please themselves.

5. And lastly, When we think to carry it by the multitude of words: 1. In reference unto man, to speak a man or his cause down, to over-bear him with a croud or throng of words, Or secondly, in reference unto God (*Eccles. 5. 2.*) *Be not hasty to utter a thing before God, or concerning God, Why? For God is in heaven, and thou upon earth, therefore let thy words be few.* There is an infinite distance between God and man. We are not able to comprehend, W or what God is; we cannot reach God,
Cum in celo Deus sit, i. e. longissime à nobis de divinis rebus ignorari necesse est. Hier. in loc.

God, and therefore we should be very careful and deliberate in speaking to and of God, or about the things of God. The Apostle (*Rom. 8. 31.*) having set forth the great mystery of the love of God to us in Christ, concludeth (as some conceive) like an Oratour, *What shall we say then to these things?* As if he had said, Here is a subject about which much might be said, but we had need be very careful how and what we say about it, *What shall we say to these things?* No man, no not the tongue of an Angel is sufficient to deliver and unfold these secrets: such love, such goodnesse are beyond words. The Moralist hath a very grave *Senec. l. 7. Nat. Quest.* and serious passage to this purpose, while he was falling upon a discourse about the heavens, stars, and superiour motions. *When we enter into our Temples, we compose our selves to reverence; we look even to our garments, that they sit comely about us; we (as it were) fashion and shape every member into an argument of modesty, In omne argu- mentum mode- stie fingimus.* How much more should we doe this, when we come to speak of the starres and heavens, but most of all, when we speak of the nature of the gods, (The best Heathen Catechismes speak no better) lest we speak any thing rashly, or affirm any thing that is untrue. If an Heathen was thus taken up with the thought of heavenly bodies, and stricken with a reverential awe, when he was to speak about Idol-gods, how much more ought we to come to the Apostles Stand, about the divine things of the great and only wise God? *What shall we say to these things?* It is good for us to avoid a multitude of words in all things, especially in things which are so high, so much above us. The Apostle admonisheth *1 Tim. 6. 20.* *Avoid prophane and vain bablings.* There may be profane and vain bablings about holy and sacred things. And that not only when we argue about them, but when we pray about them.

This excesse Christ reproveth in the prayer of the Pharisees, *Mat. 6. 4.* *They think they shall be heard for their much speaking,* and that they must prevail with God for the things they desire, because they utter many words to manifest their desires. Thus to use many words in prayer is babling, not praying. And thus to use many words in preaching, is the uncomelines, if not the sinfulness of preaching.

Paul, *Act 20.* preached until midnight. There was a multitude of words, yet not too many words: his discourse had not one of these evil ingredients; he did not speak unprofitable things, or things beside the matter, or a little matter in many words; he did

not speak, because he affected to speak, or because he thought to carry it by speaking. Thus, to pray long, or to preach long is no fault. The greatest multitude of such words, is not one too many.

*Namquid, qui
multa loquitur
non & audiet?
Vulg.*

The Vulgar varieth from our reading, Shall not he that speaketh much hear also? The original will bear it: As if he had said, Thou hast spoken a great while, wilt thou not have the patience to hear thy friend? Wilt thou have all the talk thy self? Thou hast uttered a multitude of words, be content to receive a few. They who have spoken, should be willing to hear and receive an answer. Much speaking is then most offensive, when we will not take our turns to hear. Some will have all the discourse, all the argument themselves, and when they have spoken long, will hardly endure another to reply a little. See how God hath disposed the organs of the body: he hath given two ears, and but one tongue, which speaks thus much, That a man should be more ready to hear, then to speak; and that's the Apostle James his rule, Chap. 1. 19. Let every man be swift to hear, and slow to speak: not that he doth positively commend slownesse of speech, that is not his meaning; heaviness of speech is no vertue, nor any mans commendation: but he speaks comparatively, Be swift to hear, and slow to speak; that is, Be ye more nimble with your ears, then with your tongues; be rather willing to receive instruction, then forward to give it, rather attend the minde of others, then open your own. There is a time to keep silence, and a time to speak, Eccles. 3. 7. Every thing is comely in its season.

Observe, From the whole reason, That

It is a duty to answer, when much hath been spoken.

Especially, when we conceive any thing spoken against the truth. Solomons seeming contradiction asserts this duty, Prov. 26. 4, 5. Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him. Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit. One rule saith, Answer him not, and the other saith, Answer him. The meaning is plain to the point in hand; Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him, that is, if he speak foolishly and passionately, Doe not thou answer him passionately and foolishly too, for then thou shalt be as foolish as he, thou shalt be like or equal to him; as if thy spirit and his were cast in the same mould. For the answer which a man giveth another is the measure of himself, the image of our minds

is drawn with the tongue. But answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit, that is, If he have spoken foolishly, doe thou answer him wisely and discreetly; let thine answer be according to his folly, but in thine own wisdom. Thus to answer a fool according to his folly, is indeed to answer him contrary to his folly. Thus he must be answered, or else he is not answered: and if he have no answer, he will think that he is unanswerable; that, all is oracle which he hath uttered, he will grow into proud and high conceits of himself, that surely he is a conquerour and invincible, because no man takes up the bucklers, or appears in the field against him. Therefore answer him, *Lest he (whom all that know him, know to be a fool) be wise in his own conceit. Should not the multitude of words be answered?*

And should a man full of talk be justified?

This later branch is of the same strain with the former, and what I have observed there answers both, yet I shall open the letter of the Text, and shew the elegancy of the original.

Should a man full of talk?

The Hebrew is, *A man of lips.* Mr. Broughton translates it, *Shall the lips-man be justified?* He speaks of *Job*, as if he were composed and made all of lips, *When a man useth one member inordinately, he may be said to have but one member;* Denomination is given from that which is most, or acts most. Thus as he that is a great fighter, is called, *A man of his hands*: so he that is a great talker, is called, *A man of the tongue, or a man of lips*: as if he laid by the use of all the other parts of his body to imploy his lips, or were active only with his tongue. The Apostle speaking of the variety of Church-members, under the notion of a natural body, subjoyns (1 Cor. 12. 17.) *If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling?* In like manner if the whole were lip and tongue, where were the eye, where the ear? As we may be said not to have that which we use not; so to have only that, which we use too much.

אִישׁ שִׁפְתִּים
וְשִׁפְתִּים

Notat non lo-
quacem modo,
sed etiam fa-
cundum. Merc.

Or secondly, The lips being a special instrument of speech, and a help to pronunciation, are here put for speech it self, and so we explain it in our translation, *Should a man full of talk? A man of lips, is a man full of talk. And there is a natural reason for*

*Si labium val-
de deductum
fit, atque etiam
tenuis loquaci-
tatis atque e-
loquentia sig-
num est, sicut
etiam crassiora
labia loquendi
ineptiam &
difficultatem
inducant.*

for it too. As *Physiognomists* gather conjectures from the frame of the whole body, from the lines and lineaments of the face about the habits and dispositions of the minde. So they draw arguments from the lips, whether a man be quick or slow of speech. Some mens lips have a stamp of talkativeness upon them, and others of silence. Thus we may understand that of *Moses*, *Exo. 6. 12.* When God was about to send him to *Pharaoh*, about the deliverance of *Israel* out of *Egypt*, he made many excuses, and at last fals upon this, *How shall Pharaoh hear me that am of uncircumcised lips?* But was *Moses* of uncircumcised lips? as to be of an uncircumcised heart, so to be of uncircumcised lips may intimate spiritual pollution and uncleannes. When the Prophet *Isaiah* cried out at the vision of the glory of God, *Woe is me, I am a man of unclean lips*, *Isa. 16. 5.* it is, as if he had said, *I am a man of uncircumcised lips.* But though *Moses* was humble enough in the acknowledgement of his own sinfulness, yet his aim was to note the unfilthiness of his speech, not the defiledness of his nature. For as among the Jews, uncircumcision was a sign of all the natural uncleannesses of the soul, so of some imperfections upon, or belonging to the body. Thus *Moses* called himself a man of uncircumcised lips, because he was not eloquent, but slow of speech, and slow of tongue, *Exod. 4. 10.* He was (according to the letter of the Hebrew) heavy-mouthed, or as we say, meal-mouthed; and this according to that idiom was to be of uncircumcised lips, as if *Moses* had pleaded thus, *I have not a polite and curious language to win upon Pharaoh, My tongue has not been pared and smoothed for the Court-dialect, I that have kept sheep so long, had have conversed with clowns and shepherds, How shall I speak to a King?* *Pharaoh* useth to have accurate Oratours about him, men of lips, but I am none. So then, according to this second sense, a man of lips is an eloquent man, a man ready, very ready and apt to speak; a man whose tongue is the pen, that is, like the pen of a ready writer.

*Crassiora habeo
labia, quam ut
coram rege ex-
pedire & fa-
cundè loqui
possim: circum-
cisione, i. e. ex-
tenuatione &
expoliatione la-
biorum indi-
geo. Pined.*

Further, When *Zophar* calls *Job* a man of lips, he implieth, That *Job* had carried himself in that disputation, as if every member of his body had been a lip, or as if he had a lip in every member, that is, as if every member had spoken. According to that of *Solomon* (*Prov. 6. 13.*) *He speaketh with his feet, he teacheth with his fingers*; his carriage, his posture, his action, speak and proclaim what is in his heart, or what his minde is, *He speaketh with his feet.* When violent and passionate persons are speaking, you shall

ſhall ſee, as it were, a lip in their feet, a lip upon their hands, a lip in their eyes, a lip in their brows, a lip in their arms, that is, they ſpeak with all theſe, they move their hands at you, and their heads at you, and their eyes at you, as if all ſpoke. *These are men of lips.*

Should a man of lips be justified?] He ſpeaks not of that great work of grace, the juſtification of a ſinner before God; to be juſtified here is to be approved, to carry the cauſe, or prevail in arguing. He that prevaileth in any controverſie ſhould be juſtified: *But ſhall a man of lips be justified?* Muſt he needs be thought to ſpeak truth, becauſe he ſpeaks much, or in greateſt weight, becauſe in greateſt number, *Shall he be justified?* We have the word in that ſenſe (*Pſal. 51. 4.*) *I will confeſſe, &c. that thou mighteſt be juſtified, when thou ſpeakeſt; and be clear when thou judgeſt;* That, when thou ſhalt judge and pronounce ſentence upon me, thou mayeſt appear in the opinion, and eſteem of all the world to have done me right, or not to have wronged me at all, I afore-hand confeſſe my ſin, and condemn my ſelf. So we may interpret that (*Job 13. 18.*) *Behold now, I have ordered my cauſe, I know that I ſhall be juſtified,* that is, I have laid my matters ſo well, and put my buſineſſe into ſuch a fair ſtate, that I know I ſhall come off with credit, *I know I ſhall be juſtified.* And this is it which Zophar ſeems eſpecially to charge Job with, That he hoped to get the Garland, and bear all down before him with his lips, with the multitude of his words; as if he had ſaid, *Thou haſt placed thy defence in windy words, and not in ſubſtantial truths, but this noiſe, this talk will ſtand therein little ſtead, thou ſhalt finde that the day will not be wonne with words.*

Hence obſerve,

Good words cannot make a bad cauſe good.

Words ſometimes makes a good cauſe appear bad, and a bad cauſe appear good; but when the ruſhiſh maliciously or ignorantly caſt upon the one, and the varniſh cunningly laid upon the other, are taken off, both will appear as they are, the one as good as it is, and the other as bad as it is.

Again, *Shall a man of words be justified?* He that ſpeaks much may ſooner enſnare then clear himſelf. *In many words there are uſually many errors.* Silence ſeldome brings repentance; and it is but ſeldome that much ſpeaking calls not for much repentance. They that ſpeak much, are in danger to offend much. To be ſure,

C

He

Toti veluti lingua sunt, oculis, naso, fronte, ore, manibus, cubitis, pedibus collo-

quantur. Bold.

Vincet causa,

ut necessario

habeatur veri-

dictus quia mul-

tiloquus?

Janſon.

Plerumque pro differentium

viribus & elo-

quentia pote-

ſtate etiam per-

ſpicua veritatis

conditio muta-

tur. Min.

Oſtavio.

In multiloquio

non deest pec-

catum.

וְהוּא He that hath nothing but words to hold him up, must needs fall.

Significat ali- You cannot blow away, either a mans assertion or objection with
quid seorsim af- your breath, but with your reason and authority.
fingere, machi-
nari, cogitare,
educere menda-
cium & cogita-
tione ad os.

Verse 3. Should thy lies make men hold their peace? and when thou
mockest shall no man make thee ashamed?

Rab. Mardoch. Zophar riseth higher in language still, reproving Job, not only
Objicit illi vi- for the multitude, but for the falseness of his words.

tiam, quod Grae-

Should thy lies?

ci λογοπολιται,

i.e. Famigera-

tionem vocant

quod est falsa

ingere, & aliis

narrare.

Plautus vocat

hos Geruli fi-

gulos, Ammia-

nus, Marcel.

Rami-gerilos.

We call such

Tale-bearers.

Pessimus ge-

nus hominum

qui verba gesta-

rent. Senec.

epist. 123.

Montanus ved-

dit Baddim,

Nugatores:

Galli appellant

Nugatores Ba-

dins & Ba-

deaux.

וְהוּא

Est admodum

generale nomen

apud Hebraeos,

ramum, mem-

brum, cogitatio-

nem significans

quod cogitatio-

nes in anima

sunt tanquam

rami in arbore,

huc illuc pro-

tenfi. Merc.

The Hebrew word is of a large extent, signifying in the verb, to frame, fashion, and form a thing out of a mans own minde; and so Zophar would fasten this upon Job, That the words which he had spoken were only shap't and wrought in his own spirit, he had received no such thing from God, no such thing was never approved by God; the birth of all was but his own fleeting fancy, and sickly imagination. So the word is used (Nehem. 6 8.) There are no such things done, as thou sayest, but thou feignest them out of thine own heart; Thou wouldest put me in fear, and bear me in hand (saith that worthy of Israel to his enemy suborning false fears against him) that there are strange plots laid, and many adversaries combined against me: but I perceive it is thy plot to tell me of a plot. Thy information is but to make me afraid of that which is not, not to secure me from that which is. We reade of the moneth which Jeroboam had devised of his own heart, 1 King 12. v. 33. It is the word of the Text. Lies are framed and fashioned, out of our own hearts, there is the shop wherein they are wrought; The heart is deceitfull above all things; A deceitfull heart is a fit shop to frame lies in, which are deceitfull ware. Such Zophar supposed Jobs to be.

Secondly, Some reade, Should thy toys, thy trifling discourses make men hold their peace? Should thy tatling, thy idle tales impose silence upon thy hearers?

Thirdly, The word signifies the members of the body, and the boughs of a tree, and by a trope the thoughts and abilities of the minde, which are to the minde, as limbs to the body, and as boughs shooting from a tree. I will not conceal his parts, saith God of Leviathan, Job 41. 12. that is, What mighty members he is made up of. Some reade the word so here, Should thy parts be conceal'd, or, Should men hold their peace at thy parts? As if he

had

had said, *Thou thinkest that thou hast mighty parts, that thou puttest forth such Leviathan-like members, such Goliath-like limbs of wit and knowledge, of judgement and eloquence, that all the host of learned men needs must be afraid and tremble to deal with thee, or accept thy challenge. The weapons of the minde are more powerfull, and sometimes more terrible then the members of the body. And ignorant or slow-witted man, is no more able to argue with one that is quick and judicious, then a childe is able to wrestle with a Giant.*

But the word is most usually taken in the sense we render it, for lies or falshoods; So (*Isa. 44. 25.*) *He frustrateth the tokens of the liars, namely, of those that tell lies of the stars, and say, The constellations have reported events to them, of which indeed there is not a letter written, nor a word to be spelled out of those heavenly characters. Should thy lies make men hold their peace?*

Make men.

The word may be limited to great and wise men, *Should thy lies make wise men hold their peace?* So some restrain it here; As if Zophar had said, *Indeed thy lies may cause ignorant men to hold their peace, they may deceive the simple, and catch the weak; but should thy lies make men of parts and abilities, men of experience and understanding hold their peace?* Thus the word is used *Deut. 2. 34. Psal. 17. 14. Isa. 3. 24.* to note illustrious and wise men, men of more then an ordinary pitch and measure in dignity, or in wisdom.

Others take the word indifferently for any rank or sort of men, one or other: or as we commonly speak, for *any mortall man.* For it cometh from a root which signifies death, which is the last debt of all mankind; as the Greeks have a word for man in general noting his mortality, so have the Hebtews: because all men carry about them the ensigns or symptomes of death continually, therefore they are called *Mortals.* So here, *Should thy lies make any mortall man, or any man alive hold his peace?* Be he high or low, knowing or ignorant, I tell thee the most simple man that goes upon the ground cannot hold his peace, when thou speakest, and may well enough answer all that thou hast spoken. Thus you see the sense is heighned by the lownesse of the persons, who are supposed match enough for Job in this controversie. What, thou

וְאִם

Aliquando denotat viros notabiles & insignes. Coc.

וְאִם

Est generale comprehendens viros, mulieres & parvulos, hac vox (אִם מוֹתָ) ex eo nata videtur quod omnes finis mortis subiecti, ita à Græcis & à latinis mortalis usurpatur. Mar.

thou hast argued, a woman, even the weakest among women, a childe, even a little childe, may confute and answer. We need not send for the great Rabbies and Doctours of the law to deal with thee. Who can be silent, or speak without successe? *Should thy lies make men hold their peace?*

Hold their peace?

החריש

*Obmutescere.
Solet Scriptura
per verbum si-
lendi & tacendi
reverentia ple-
num timorem
exprimere.*

No, They should not: Should what thou hast spoken falsely be received like an oracle of truth, against which no man may open his mouth or mutter? Should it be received as some divine revelation which all must admire, none question? Must all the world of reasonable men stand mute at these thy reasonings? Hast thou any hope that thy lies shall finde such entertainment, and go off at such a rate of belief or admiration?

Holding the peace importeth greatest reverence both to speakers and actours, as also greatest worth or weight in what is spoken or done. When the Lord slew the two sons of *Aaron* by fire from Heaven, *Aaron held his peace*, in token of submission, *Levit. 10. 3.*

ה

*Quam vocem
Hieronymus
interjectionem
esse docet impe-
rantis silen-
tium. Vel est
imperativum
per apocopen ab
החריש tacuit
reverentia cau-
sa. Buxt.*

And when providential actings spake aloud the deliverance of the Jews out of *Babylon*, the Prophet like a crier in a court, commands or proclaims silence (*Zech. 2. 13. Be silent, O all flesh, before the Lord, for he is raised up out of his holy habitation.*) The Hebrew word *Has* (saith one of the Anciens) is an interjection, or rather a verb of the imperative mood, enjoyning silence or inhibiting speech; we in our language use a word near that in sound, when we would have any, or all, hold their peace, we say, *Husht*: So saith the Prophet, *Husht*, not a word, *For the Lord is raised up out of his holy habitation*; his meaning is, Yeeld all reverence, respect and fear, Stand in awe, Budge not, let the wicked silence their vain boasts, and the godly their vain fears. Let neither the one or the other utter a word before the Lord.

Job describing himself in his former flourishing estate, saith, *Unto me men gave ear and waited, and kept silence at my counsel; after my words they spake not again* (*Chap. 29. 21.*) that is, I was a man of so much authority and veneration, that when I spake no man would offer to speak after me, much lesse contradict what I had spoken; Thus it was once with *Job*: Now *Zophar* puts it as a matter of reproof. What? dost thou think thy words, yea thy lies

lies such, as no man may examine, much lesse gain-say? *Should thy lies make men hold their peace?*

Again, As holding the peace, notes reverence, so favour and connivence. When we are willing to let an ill word spoken, or a thing ill done passe, as if we saw or heard it not, we hold our peace at it. *When the children of Belial said of Saul, How shall this man save us? and they despised him, and brought him no presents,* The Text saith, *But he held his peace, He was as if he had been deaf,* 1 Sam. 10. 27. It is wisdom not to see or hear, what we are not in a condition to redresse. Connivence is better then complaint, when we cannot mend our selves, nor reduce others. In this sense we may also take, Holding the peace here. Should any man favour or wink at thee? Should any man be afraid to speak truth, when thou speakest lies?

Hence observe,

First thus, *It is a duty to vindicate, or to be an advocate for oppressed truth.*

Zophar spake true in the generall, Lies must not make us hold our peace. It is a duty to plead the cause of truth, yea to be valiant for the truth. We must know no relations in truths case. Socrates is my friend, Plato is my friend, but truth is a better friend then both. Whosoever dares speak against truth, we must dare to speak for it. 'Tis noble to shew our selves friends to truth, though we lose friends by it, and enemies to error, though we get enemies by it. There is a three-fold lie which we must not hold our peace at.

1. There is a verball lie, when a man tels a false tale, or bringeth up a false report, which is the lie of the ninth Commandment, *Thou shalt not bear false witnesse.* Hold not thy peace at such a lie.

2. There is a doctrinal lie, when a false position is averred to be the truth of God, and stampd with divine authority. Any erroneous Doctrine is comprehended under, and branded with this title, *A lie*; For this cause (saith Paul) namely, *because they received not the love of the truth, God shall send them strong delusions, that they shall beleieve a lie.* (2 Thess. 2. 11.) He means a doctrinal lie, all the doctrine of that man of sinne, with which he hath deceived the world under the notion of truth, is but one great lie. We must contend earnestly, even wrestle for the faith once committed to the Saints against all those lies.

3. There is a practicall lie, of which the Apostle speaks (1 Joh. 2, 4, 5.) *He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his Commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him.* That is a lie, not spoken but done, when a mans actions contradict his profession, or when his works unteach what he hath taught by word. The whole life of an hypocrite is but one continued lie. The first of these is a lie told, the second is a lie taught, the third is a lie acted, and all of them are not only to be abhorred in our selves, but opposed in others. All lying is hatefull to God, being most opposite unto God, who is the true God, and the God of truth. Lying makes us like the devil, who was a liar as well as a murtherer from the beginning; the devil told the first false tale, and preached the first false Doctrine; He is therefore justly called, *A liar from the beginning.* We may sometimes forbear to speak the truth, but we must never forbear to speak against a lie, whether verbal, doctrinal or practical. Should thy lies make men hold their peace?

377

Irrisit, subsannavit, balbutivit, nam si quos cum sanna excipere volumus blasphemiam effingere solemus ad eos ridendos. Merc.

Sanna est derisio quæ non fit simplicibus verbis, sed gestu. Pisc. in 1. ep. ad Cor. c. 14. 21. Quid potest esse tam ridiculum, quam sannio est, qui ore vultu imitandis moribus, denique corpore ridetur. Cic. l. 2. de Orat.

And when thou mockest shall no man make thee ashamed?

This is the third charge, and it is higher then the former two: Multitude of words is ill enough; and lies are farre worse, but to mock is worst of all. And which is yet more, The word which is here used signifieth the worst kinde of mocking, even that which is joyned with scorn and extream derision: It notes mocking not only with the tongue by uncomely speeches, but mocking by the eye or hand with uncivil gestures, or by the affected mimical postures of the whole body; The enemies of Christ are so described in that noble prophecy (Psal. 22. 6.) *I am a worm and no man, a reproach of men, and despised of the people, all they that see me laugh me to scorn, they shoot out the lip, they shake the head;* The event fulfilled this at the death of Christ, *Mat. 27.* Such mocking Zophar chargeth Job with; Thou dost not only speak lies, but thou settest them off with scornfull gestures. Again, This word signifieth not only a light jeast, or a merriment, but that which hath virulency, and wears a sting; not only that which hath ridiculousnesse in it, but that which hath cruelty in it, That's the Apostles Epithete (Heb. 11. 36.) *They had trial of cruel mockings.*

Thus he reproves Job, as if while he lay in the dust, and was groveling on the ground, he had like a mad man cast fire-brands, arrows

arrows and death, or had behaved himself more like a fool in a play, then a mirrour of patience, *Deceiving his neighbour, and saying, Am not I in sport?* Prov. 26. 18, 19.

There is much labour among Interpreters, to finde out what gave *Zophar* occasion to break out in so much bitterness upon *Job*. I shall touch that in the close, *When thou mockest*

Shall no man make thee ashamed?

Some render, *Shall no man confute thee?* We may put both together. Shall no man by confuting thee put thee to shame? When a confident man is thorowly answered, he is ashamed.

The word which we translate, *Make ashamed*, signifies the greatest shame, as that before did the greatest mocking. Highest shame is but a fit reward for highest scorn. Some Criticks in that language have observed, that the word is never taken, but in an ill sense, for the most shamefull shame, when a person is so ashamed that he is confounded, and dares not lift up his head, or look another in the face. The Lord saith to *Moses* in the case of *Miriam*, *If her father had but spit in her face, should she not be ashamed seven dayes?* Numb. 12. 14. The face is the table of beauty and honour, but when it is spit upon, it is made a sink of shame. God did more then spit in the face of his undutifull daughter *Miriam*, when he filled her face with the filthy spots of leprosie: *Miriam* must be greatly ashamed, when shut out of the Camp and society of *Israel* seven dayes. When *David*, over passionately lamenting the death of *Absalom*, blemished the victory of that day, and soiled the beauty of that great deliverance, the Text saith 2 Sam. 19. 3. that the souldiery went home, *as men ashamed*: Souldiers after a battel wonne are wont to come home gallantly, and in a triumph, but these victors gat them by stealth that day into the City, as people being ashamed steal away, when they flee in battel; they went sneaking, as we say, home to their dwellings, scarce a man durst lift up his head. Such a sense is here intended, Shouldst not thou be made to hold down thy head and cover thy face for shame, who hast opened thy mouth in scorn, and in discovering thy own shame?

Note from it,

First, *Scornfull gestures and mockings are the height of sinnings.*

Zophar puts this in the third place, as the highest step in the gradation.

כל
Ignominioso
pudore suffan-
dor gravius
significat quam
וירא quod est
in bonum ali-
quando hoc
semper in ma-
lum.
R. D. Kimchi
Buxtorf.
Significat eum
qui conscientia
turpitudinis ho-
minum oculos
fugit, ut pro-
fligati milites,
qui sine Ova-
tione, taciti &
clanculo re-
deunt Domum.
Com.

gradation of Jobs sin. There is a walking in the counsel of the ungodly, and a standing in the way of sinners, before we sit down in the chair of the scorers (Psal. I. I.) The Vulgar reads it, *In the chair of the malignants*. When men, once arrive at scorning and mocking, they are come to the uppermost form of sinners. *The chair of mocking, is the chair of malignity*. That which is said of a woman in a peculiar sense, is true of any man in this sense, *When he hath lost his modesty, he hath nothing else to lose*. The Apostle Peter being about to shew the utmost evil of the worlds old-age or dotage in sin, saith, *There shall come in the last dayes scoffers* 2 Pet. 3. 3. There have ever been deceivers, but at last there shall come scoffers, saying, *Where is the promise of his coming? For since the Fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation*. Julian was in his time counted, and stands upon record to this day among the greatest of sinners, *An apostate from Christ*; and did not the apostasie of his heart break out chiefly at his lips? Did not the very spirit of his malignity against the Gospel of Christ, appear in mocking the Christians? When he had taken away their estates, he said, *It should not trouble you to be poor, your Master was poor*, and he said, *Blessed are the poor*. And when he had caused them to be smitten, Your Master (saith he) hath taught you, *That whosoever shall smite you on the right cheek, you must turn to him the other also*. Thus he turned the holy counsels of Christ into prophane jests. The vilest wickednesse of the Jewish state is exprest thus, *They mocked the messengers of God, and misused his Prophets* (2 Chron. 36. 16.) It is a great sin not to hear the messengers of God, not to obey the truth that is brought in his name; but to mock his messengers is the dregs of sin. When upon the ascent of Christ into heaven, many had received such an abundant inundation of the Spirit, That they spake with divers tongues the wonderfull works of God, Some (saith the Text) *were in doubt, saying one to another, what meaneth this? Others mocking, said, These men are full of new wine*, (Act. 2. 13.) Others *mocking, &c.* Mockers must stand by themselves, They are marked for wrath: We may warn all such, as the Prophet doth, *Isa. 28. 22. Now therefore be ye not mockers, lest your bands be made strong*. If God make the bands of affliction and wrath strong upon any, it will be upon mockers. They break the strongest bands of duty, therefore their bands of misery shall be stronger then they can break.

Reditus ecclesis eripuit Sarcasmi additis, se Christianos expeditores facere ad regnum caelorum, quia Galilaus magister ipsorum dixerit, beatos esse pauperes, &c. Pezel. in Sleid.

Secondly,

Secondly, Observe.

We should not forbear to own, no not a mocke and a derided truth.

Christ will be ashamed of that man, who shall be ashamed of him, and of his words in an adulterous and sinfull generation. When truth is honoured and applauded, it is easie to own it, but it is our greatest honour to own a dishonoured and a despised truth.

Thirdly, *Mockers should be put to shame.*

Yea, Mockers shall be put to shame. They who cast shame upon the truth, shall have shame cast upon themselves, they shall be buried in shame. They that lift up their heads against Christ, against the people and wayes of Christ, shall be made to hold down their heads, to hold them down for ever. *When thou mockest, shall no man make thee ashamed?* If man do not, God will.

It is here enquired, why *Zophar* imputes these three faults, 1. Mutiloquy. 2. Lying. 3. And mocking unto *Job*, What occasion had the poor man given for this accusation?

For the first, nothing appears but this, which comes nothing: *Job* spake a little more then his friend *Eliphaz*, and not much more then *Balaad*, the discourse of *Bildad* is contained in one short Chapter *Job* lengthened out his answer in two, except this will make it out (which must be very poorly) I see not how he over-acted with his tongue, or failed in speaking too much.

For the second, Some fasten *Zophars* suspicion of a lie upon that in the 10th Chapter, vers. 7. *Thou knowest that I am not wicked*; As if he had obtruded that upon the knowledge of God, which was not, and therefore was not to be known.

Thirdly; He is judged mocking at the third verse of the tenth Chapter, *Is it good unto thee that thou shouldest oppresse, that thou shouldest despise the work of thine hands, and shine upon the counsell of the wicked?* But besides these conjectures, *Zophar* himself gives the reason expressly in the next words, *For, Thou hast said, My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in thine eyes*: As if he had said, *If thou thinkest that I charge thee unjustly, in saying that thou hast scattered lies, and art a mocker, I will tell thee plainly, what renders thee guilty in my thoughts, Thou hast said, My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in his sight.* But how slender a foundation this position yeelds, to support so heavy a charge (were it *Jobs* (in terminis) in down-right words, which yet hath not appeared) I shall

clear in the opening of those words. But before I come so farre, take two or three Observations, upon the Preface in generall, as it contains this three-fold accusation already opened.

First, *That is no new thing for him that speaks truth to be counted a lier, nor for him that speaks seriously to be counted a mocker.*

It was so with *Job*, There were some slips of passion in *Job*, but no error in his opinion, and yet he is called a lier: poor *Job* who lay upon the dung-hill full of sores, and bodily distempers, full of sorrow and inward temptations, had little leisure to mock and jeer; his very wounds might speak his deniall of such behaviour, yet he is judged a mocker. The Apostles were sometimes counted mad men, besides themselves, and out of their wits; sometimes cunning and crafty men, who went about to out-wit others. *Paul* is put to his plea in that common case (*2 Cor. 6. 4.*) as deceivers, yet true; we are lookt upon as a company of *Mountebanks*, as if our design were to cheat the people at once, of their purses, and of their souls. We are esteemed deceivers, as if we were hired to cry up an Impostour, rather than a Saviour, and to fill the world with fables, rather than solid truths; but truth of understanding is the commodity we deal in, and we deal in it with truth of heart. Again (*2 Cor. 2. 17.*) *We are not as many, which corrupt the word of God;* Even they who received the Word by immediate revelation, were suspected of corrupting the Word, of mixing and mingling it with their own inventions, to serve turns, or to make it comply with their own interests. But (saith he) we are no corrupters, we make not our own markets of the Word, we do not put it off for worldly advantages or gain, we only make this advantage and merchandise of it, the gaining of your soules.

Secondly, Observe,

A good man may causlessly charge those that are innocent.

As we must not at all judge a man to be wicked, who is falsely charged, so we should be very cautious how we judge a man wicked, who chargeth another falsely. This age is a charging age, The tongue and pen have made as hot charges as the sword. Lier, Heretike, Schismaticke, Deceiver, Hypocrite, are the common weapons of our paper warre. It is a duty to give a meek interpretation of rigid censures, much more to be sparing in our judgments upon rigid censurers. A good man may passe an ill sentence upon

*Prima semper
irarum tela
sunt maledicta.
Sal.*

upon those who are and do good. So did Zophar upon Job, and yet upright in the main.

Thirdly, Observe,

It is a dangerous thing to say that is a lie or false, which we are not able to make out for truth.

That was Zophars case, he could not bring both ends of Jobs speech together; He suspects all was nought, because he could not finde what was good. Job was neither babler, nor lier, nor mocker, though Zophar thought him all these. We thorow the glasse of our own notions, and especially thorow that of our own prejudices, see things in strange colours. We should look upon every thing in its own likenesse; We should prove and try every thing to the bottome before we censure, as well as before we approve. That may be found serious, which at first weighs but light, and that a truth which we called a lie. Such caution was never more needed, nor lesse used then at this day.

J O B Chap. 11. Vers. 4, 5, 6.

For thou hast said, My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in thine eyes.

But O that God would speak, and open his lips against thee.

And that he would shew thee the secrets of wisdom, that they are double to that which is; Know therefore, that God exacteth of thee lesse then thine iniquity deserveth.

IN the three former verses we had the Preface of Zophars speech.

In this fourth, He laies down the opinion or position, which he opposeth and speaks against in the fifth and sixth, *Thou hast said, My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in thine eyes.* This Zophar interpreted, as carrying a secret accusation, and reflection upon the justice of God. In saying, *Thou art innocent, thou saiest, God is unrighteous. He that (being punished) acquitteth himself, condemneth his Judge.*

Thou hast said.

*Dicere est af-
firmare & pro
certo asserere.*

Or, Thou hast confidently affirmed: The word imports more than a bare *say-so*; Thou hast strongly testified for thy self, *My doctrine is pure, and I am clean.* That's the force of *David's* infirmity (*Psal. 116. 11.*) *I said in my haste, All men are liars. I said,* is, more than a conjecture, and more than a naked affirmation, even an assertion, and a confident assertion too. So is,

Thou hast said.

If another had said it, we should sooner have believed it. A modest submission of thy doctrine to the judgement of thy superiours, or of thy friends and equals, would become thee better. We have reason to doubt thy doctrine more, because we see thy own hand writes the approbation, and thou art not only a witness, but the only witness in thy own cause.

Hence note,

When a man bears witness of himself, he laies himself open to jealousies and suspicion.

Thou hast said, My doctrine is pure, Thou shouldst have expected the testimony of another. What do thy neighbours say of thee? What do thy friends say of thee? Doe they subscribe this certificate, That thy doctrine is pure, and thy life clean? Christ holds forth a divine prerogative, when he saith (*Joh. 8. 14.*) *Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true.* God may give testimony to himself, and Christ there speaks in reference to his Godhead, as his next words intimate, *I know whence I came, and whether I go.* **It is the priviledge of God alone to be a self-witness.** Hence that of Christ (*Joh. 5. 31.*) *If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true.* How shall we pacifie and reconcile these two texts? In one Christ saith, *Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true;* and in another, *If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true.*

Concessio Rhetorica. Bez.

I answer first, Christ speaks either by way of concession, though I should grant thus much to you, that if I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true, yet I have further testimony (as he shews in the following verse) *There is another beareth witness of me,* and so I can easily spare my own. Or

Secondly, If I should barely assert for my self, I give you an occasion to suspect whether my assertion be true.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, The word which we translate *true*, is well rendred *firm*, If I bear witnesse to my self, my witnesse is not valid or authentically, for another man may bear witnesse to his neighbour, and his witnesse not be true, but that which ratifieth a testimony (*foro humano*) is when it comes from a second, or a third, *In the mouth of two or three witnesses, shall every word be established, Deut. 19. 15.*

But may we not bear witnesse to our selves?

In some cases we may, in most we may not, especially in these two.

1. When we testifie for our selves out of an ambition to commend our selves, to spread our own plumes, and to grow up into the applause of the world. This is pharisaicall boasting of, rather then witnes-bearing to our selves.

2. When what we say or testifie is untrue. We must not bear false-witnes, either for or against our selves. *Zophar* suspects *Jobs* self-witnes of both these errors, as aiming at self-applause, and that by arrogating more to himself, then he was able to make out. He offends who affects to blazon himself by a worth which is really his; but he that blazons himself by a worth which is not his, multiplies offences. Some say *they are Jews, and are not, but are the Synagogue of Satan, (Revel. 2. 9.)* A Jew may offend, in saying, he is a Jew, but he that saith he is a Jew, that is, a true believer (for under those old Testament terms, Gospel-professours are exprest in the *Revelation*) and is not, that is, hath neither the inward power, nor the outward evidence of a Saint, his pretended piety is double iniquity. A Jew of Satans Synagogue, is the worst disciple of his Synagogue, *None are so bad as they, who only seem to be good. They are twice dead, who have but a name to be alive.* The Apostle chides those bitterly, who were Jews only in the letter, and in the flesh (*Rom. 2. 17, 19.*) *Behold, thou art called a Jew, and retest in the law, and makest thy boast of God, and art confident that thou thy self art a guide of the blinde, &c. Thou that teachest another, teachest thou not thy self? Thou who makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law, dishonourest thou God?* To say our doctrine is pure, when it is defiled with error; to say our selves are clean, when we are either openly prophane, or closely hypocriticall, adds to the impurity of our doctrine, and to the uncleanness of our lives. Most appear too too bad, but they are worst, who would appear better then they are.

But doe we not finde *Paul* more then once maintaining his own integrity? Saith he not, *I have lived in all good conscience before God untill this day*, Act. 23. 1. Saith he not? *I am not mad, most noble Festus, but speak forth the words of truth and sobernesse*, Act. 26. 25. When we are accused and called to answer, we may say, Our doctrine is pure, when it is; and, that we are clean, when we are.

In such a case, not to testifie the truth for our selves, is near as bad, as to testifie a falshood against another. And in any case to give a wrong testimony of our selves, is worse then to give it of another. *The sinne is the greater, by how much the person against whom we sinne is nearer to us, and every man is nearest to himself.*

*Calumniatoris
hæc verba sunt
non veritatem
& iustitiam
prosequentis
Beda.*

*Non ita dixit
tantum dixit
nihil impium
feci. Hieron.
In eadem sen-
tentia sunt
Gregorius &
Chrysost.*

Thou hast said; And what said he? My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in thy sight. Divers of the Ancients upon this place challenge *Zophar* of slander and calumny, for fastning this report or fame upon *Job*. One is very angry with him, How is it possible (saith he) that *Job* should be imagined to rise to such a pitch of self-confidence, or to speak at such a rate of spiritual pride, when he testifies (Chap. 9. 20. *If I justify my self, mine own mouth shall condemn me; if I say I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse.* And though *Job* said, *I am not wicked*, yet he said not, *I am clean*. The difference is great between a deniall of wickednes, and a presumption of cleannes. These two cannot expound each other: He that presumes he is clean, denies he is wicked: Yet he that denies he is wicked, may be far enough from affirming, that he is clean. Such consequences have more uncharitableness then logick in them, and can hardly expect so much charity, as to acquit them from slander.

But I dare not put an intendment of slander upon *Zophars* account. That's too deep, and more then can be justified. For, though *Job* spake not thus, in so many syllables, yet to that effect he had spoken; words had past from him, which might give, at least a colourable, pretence for such a charge. And *Zophar* seems (in one respect) to deal better with *Job* then his other friends; for he collects the matter upon which he minded to debate with him, and laieth it down in an entire proposition, *This is the thing thou hast said, My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in his sight*, When or where said he so? Some settle it upon that (Chap. 6. vers. 10.) *I have not concealed the words of the holy One*; that is,

(as

(as theſe expound) I have ſpoken truth, and all the truth. Others put it upon that (Chap. 10. 2.) *Shew me wherefore thou contendſt with me*; which hath (ſay they) this ſecret intimation in it, That Job did not ſee any ſin in himſelf, and that he thought God himſelf could hardly ſhew him one, for which he contend- ed with him. Thoſe words alſo at verſ. 7. of the ſame Chapter, *Thou knoweſt that I am not wicked*; are ſuppoſed an appeal to God himſelf to give teſtimony againſt him, if he could; *Thou knoweſt*, and I will ſtand to thy Judgement, *that I am not wicked*. Theſe paſſages Zophar might conſtrue to the ſenſe given, As if he had ſaid, *I am clean in thy ſight*. And we finde Job in his following diſcourſe (Chap. 31. 7.) ſpeaking out plainly, *If my ſtep hath turned out of the way, and mine heart walked after mine eyes, and if any blot hath cleaved to my hands; then let me ſowe, and let another eat, &c.* If any blot hath cleaved to my hands; amounts to as much as this in the letter, *I am clean in thy ſight*. And as Zophar here ſo Elihu taxeth him with it elſewhere (Chap. 33. 8, 9.) *Surely thou haſt ſpoken in mine hearing, and I have heard the voice of thy words, ſaying, I am clean without tranſgreſſion, I am innocent, neither is there iniquity in me.*

What then was faulty in Zophar?

This. He managed his diſcourſe more like an Accuſer, then a Comforter. He amplified and ſtrained the words of Job to a ſenſe which he intended not. He ſpake what might be cloathed with ſuch an interpretation; But, *Charity thinketh no evil, and love would have made a better Comment*. He never meant to raiſe himſelf upon his own innocency, or to ſtand upon his terms with God, How often had he diſclaimed and even proteſted againſt ſuch over-weenings? Yet his friends impoſe that ſenſe upon him all along; and will make him ſay, what he never thought, and own what his ſoul abhorred.

Take one note from their miſtake, and then I ſhall give the ſenſe of the poſition more diſtinctly.

Words are often miſconſtrued, and reckoned for more then the ſpeaker meant them.

We are apt to put unſound głoſſes upon the Word both of God and man. Many report the matter ſpoken, falſly, and very few report the meaning of the ſpeaker truly. More quarrels and controversies ariſe from the miſtake of words, then from difference of judgements. There is ſcarce a book written about

Accuſatorum more ampli- cat, & inter- pretatione pa- rum benevole- ra rem adducit ut talia conſe- retur locutus, Jobus. Sanct. Neceſſe eſt con- ſentioſius lo- quaris, quod probare non poſſis. Quintil. Dedam. 18.

any Tenet which is opposed, but the Authour is forced to a great expence of time and pains for the clearing of his meaning from the mistakes of opposites. Yea a man can hardly let a word fall in ordinary conference, but some mis-improvement is made of it. When *Peter* asked Christ concerning *John*, *Lord*, and *what shall this man doe?* *Jesus* saith unto him, *if I will that he tarry till I come, What is that to thee?* Joh. 21. 22. Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that *Disciple* should not die; Howbeit *Jesus* said not unto him, *He shall not die*, but *if I will that he tarry till I come, What is that to thee?* False witnesses come against Christ, and what is their testimony? This fellow said, *I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three daies*, Mat. 26. 61. This was a meer mistake of the words of Christ, Joh. 2. 19. where when he was demanded by the Jews, *What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things?* He answered, *Destroy this temple, and in three daies I will raise it up.* How grossly did they corrupt this Text by their exposition of it! Christ said, *Destroy ye*, they made it, *I am able to destroy*; he said, *This temple*, meaning his own body, They say, the materiall temple, or place of public worship: So the Jews stumbled at his words, when they fell first from his lips, as their reply telleth us, *Fourty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three daies?* The Evangelist explains him right in the next line, *But he spake of the temple of his body.* It is to be bewail'd how such mis-understandings have troubled the Church and servants of God; and that so many have suffered upon such mis-understandings. The Wiseman hath a Proverb, which reacheth this abuse, though it be not direct to the point in hand, *He that covereth a transgression seeketh love, but he that repeateth a matter, separateth very friends,* (Prov. 17. 9.) He aims at tale-bearers, who repeat what they hear upon design to breed jealousies, and heart-burning among friends, or, according to the language of the times, to *cajole* the nearest and the strongest *confidants*. But we may apply it to the sense before us, That usually they who repeat a matter, separate very friends; For who is it almost that repeateth the discourse of another (especially if he hath any prejudice against the party; or doth not meet fully in opinion with him) but he spoils it in repeating, and so separates very friends? This was the fault of *Jobs* friends, they repeated his words, but most of their repetitions were perversions or unkind Criticisms upon, rather than charitable

ritable reports of what he spake. And therefore he was forced (Chap. 23. 3.) to appeal unto God with whom he knew himself should finde candid dealing, and his words receive a genuine interpretation. *O that I knew where I might finde him, that I might come even to his seat, I would order my cause before him, and fill my mouth with arguments;* As if he had said, I have been often wronged by my friends in misconceiving what I have argued, but were I to argue and plead it with God himself, I know he would deal fairly with me, and put a right sense upon every word, he would make the best of what is not so well spoken, and nothing but good of what is well spoken. He would receive what is right, and rectifie what is amisse. Let us now examine what *Zophar* judged *Job* to have spoken amisse.

Thou hast said, My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in thy sight.

His supposed error was, that he thought his doctrine true, and this was his blot, That he thought himself clean. This thou hast said,

My doctrine is pure.

That is, I am orthodox or sound in judgement, both in my generall tenets, and in what I have particularly maintained in the present disputation concerning the providence of God in afflicting godly men, and in dispensing outward comforts to the wicked. *Thou hast said thy doctrine, delivered upon both or either of these subjects, is pure.*

The originall word which we render *Doctrine*, is derived from *קִיַּץ* a root which signifies *to take, or to receive*. And that upon a three-fold ground,

1. Because such doctrines are delivered upon the taking of mature deliberation, or gained, by taking much pains for them.

Accipere, doctrina dicitur ab accipiendo, i. e. discendo nam discere est accipere. Drus.

2. Because such doctrines are in their own right to be received. Sound doctrine is worthy to be received, it is worthy of all reverence and ready acceptation.

3. Because there is a power in such doctrines, to take or catch those unto whom they are spoken. *Truth is full, not only of strength, but of subtilty.* Hence some conceive that the allusion is to hunters and fowlers, who lay baits, and set traps to catch birds, or other game, So (in a good sense) a man of wisdom and understanding,

Metaphora sumpta a venatione. Pisc.

E

standing,

standing, publishing sound doctrine, laies a bait, with holy craft to ensnare and catch his auditours (*Prov. 11. 30.*) *He that winneth souls is wise*; it is this word, they who are godly and judicious catch souls, as a fowler catcheth birds: by laying out sound, wise and faithfull arguments, they take and snap men, they hold their spirits fast, till they overcome and win them, even as the snare of the fowler takes the bird; Such are wise men indeed. The whorish woman (*Prov. 7. 13, 21.*) is said, to catch or gain the simple young man (the word is the same in the original) *by her fair speech*, her taking language, *A whores doctrine is very taking, her lips drop ensnaring eloquence.* As there is a power in sinfull counsell to take and ensnare; so much more in holy and wholesome counsell. The Apostle was a Crafts-master in this soul-trade (*2 Cor. 12. 16.*) *Being crafty* (saith he) *I caught you with guile*; I plaid the *cunning mate* with you, I laid a snare, and set a trap, but all for your good.

Further, The word signifies pleasure and sweetnes, noting thus much, *That purity of doctrine is pleasant, and gives much delight.* As meats are to the taste, so are truths to the understanding: nothing brings in greater contentment to any faculty, then a clear apprehension of the proper object. Sutablenesse is the ground of pleasure. And the pleasures of the intellectuall part, are as much above those of the sensitive, as the understanding it self is above the senses. A *Philosopher* having found out a true and rationall conclusion in *Geometry*, ran about the City, where he lived, as if he had been distracted with joy, saying, *I have found it, I have found it.* When God gives, and we by study and prayer finde out the treasures of divine truth, it is as the beginning of heaven (*Mat. 13. 44.*) *The Kingdome of heaven is like unto a treasure hid in a field, the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof, goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.* The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoycing the heart, *Psal. 19. 8.* To receive pure doctrine is as much a pleasure, as it is an honour; as much the delight, as the ornament of the minde.

וְאֵלֶּיךָ

*Mundus purus
clarus fuit, est
lucere ad mo-
dum vitri &
chrystalli.*

My doctrine is pure.

Pure.] The word signifies pellucid or clear, that which a man may look thorow as glasse, or to the bottom of it, as a crystall fountain. *Pure doctrine is like glasse or a crystall stream,* upon which

which you may not only look, but look thorow it, and to the bottome of it, and finde all clear. Such a puriry is here meant, *My doctrine is pure.* Purity of doctrine imports two things.

1. *The preciousnesse of doctrine, for that which is pure is precious, and every thing the more pure it is, the more precious it is in its kinde.*

2. The unmixednesse, the uncompoundednesse of doctrine, Purity is opposed to mixture; Pure is as much as simple or uncompounded; we reade of the *simplicity of the Gospel* (2 Cor. 11. vers. 3.) which is nothing else but the purity of the Gospel. The contrary whereof is corrupting or *adulterating the word of God*, by the addition of humane inventions, and our own fancies.

My doctrine is pure.] Pure in both these senses, It is precious and worth much: it is unmixed, nothing but it self. I have not feigned and coyned it out of mine own brain. I have not embased it with an Allay of inferiour metall; it is the sincere simple Word of God.

Whence note,

True doctrine is pure doctrine.

True doctrine is pure two waies. It is pure *subjectively*, and it is pure *effectively*. It is pure in it self, and purifies us, *Joh. 17. v. 17. Sanctifie them thorow thy truth, thy word is truth.* *Pure doctrine will purifie. False principles breed false practices; crooked rules make crooked lives;* That which is polluted is as apt to pollute, as that which is pure to purifie. *The nature of things is stamp upon their effects.* Truth is compared to the most excellent metals, and it excels them. The Apostle speaking of all sorts of doctrines built upon *Christ the foundation*, calls some *gold, silver, precious stones*: others, *wood, hay, stubble* (1 Cor. 3. 12.) The difference of doctrine is set forth under these Metaphors: Pure doctrine is *gold, silver, precious stones*; False doctrine is *wood, hay, stubble*, these are combustible matter, they will burn, they will not bear the triall; whereas the Word of God, and so the truths that are bottomed upon that, are (*Psal. 12. 6.*) Pure, How pure? *As silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times*; that is, it is altogether pure, having not the least drosse in it, *My doctrine is pure.*

And I am clean.

בר à ברר

*Mundum red-
didit, versit, po-
livit, discrevit,
elegit.*

*Hac vox cum
filium signifi-
cat, chaldaica
est, & in ea sig-
nificatione tan-
tum, Pl. 2. 12.
Pro. 31. 2. re-
peritur. Pisc.*

The word [*Bar*] undergoeth a three-fold interpretation among the Rabbins.

1. It signifies clean or pure. So we translate.

2. It signifies a *Son* or man-childe (so it is rather a Chaldee word) *Prov. 31. 2. Psal. 2. 12. Kisse the Sonne*: and from this word *Bar*, a son, it is conceived that in our Northern parts, a childe is called a *barn*; in the latin, the same word denotes a young childe, and pure or clean, and so it bears fair to the interpretation of the text: because howsoever a childe is naturally all filthy and unclean, in regard of the guilt and pollution of original sin: yet in regard of acts, a childe is clean, he is white paper, as he hath no fair letters, so no blots upon him.

3. It signifies elect, chosen or preferred before others (*Cant. 6. 9.*) *She is the only one of her mother, she is* (*Bar*, the word of the Text, *the clean one, or*) *the choice one of her that bare her*. But how is she called the *only one* of her mother, and yet *the choice one of her that bare her*? if there be but one, how can there be any choice? The original is, *She is the one of her mother, and such an one*, as if she had ten thousand to chuse out of, she could not chuse a better; this would be her only childe, her flower, how many soever she might be supposed to have. If a man who hath many children likes one more then the rest, he useth to say, *There is my only son, that's he*. One as good as can be, is a choice one, though we have no more; yet properly a choice one, is the best among many. In this sense the word is used (*Nehem. 5. 18.*) where the bill of fare for *Nehemiah* his Table is thus drawn up, *He had six choice sheep, &c.* They did not take the flock as they came, but picked the best for the Governours Table. Thus the word carries a comparative sense in it, pointing out not only one that is clean, but one elect before others for his cleanness, *I am clean*,

In thine eyes.

*Te, O Deus,
iudice & teste,
se bene conscio.*

That is, Thou, O God, considering, trying and judging me, I shall yet be found clean. It is an high challenge, but we are not to take it strictly; *Job* was no legal Justiciary, he sought not righteousness in the works of the Law, but thorow faith in the Messiah: He speaks here, as in other like places, one or all of these three waies.

1. In

1. In opposition to the opinion which men had of him : As if he had said, In the sight of men I am filthy and unclean, an hypocrite and wicked : my friends judge me so, but, *I am clean in thine eyes.*

2. *I am clean in thine eyes*; that is, in the generall bent of my spirit, *in the common tenour of my heart and life*; *Though I have my failings, yet my course is holy.* Denomination is taken from the better and greater part.

3. *I am clean*, &c. that is, in reference to the speciall charge, which my friends lay upon me; they say I am an hypocrite, Lord, I am clean from that in thine eyes. Thus *David* (Psal. 18. 24.) *Therefore hath the Lord recompensed me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands in his eye-sight.* The same Comment will serve *David's* Text and *Jobs*. *David* was not in a contestation with the justice of God upon his own integrity, but upon a vindication of his integrity from the injustice and jealousies of men.

Hence we may observe (which is a seeming contradiction.)

No man is clean in Gods sight, Some men are clean in Gods sight.

No man is clean in Gods sight, that is, in himself or of himself, *Job 14. 4. Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?* Every man is hewen from a corrupt stock, and therefore is corrupt, *Behold the heavens are not clean in his sight, Job 15. 15. Yea he chargeth his angels with folly* (Chap. 4. 18.) How great then is the folly of that man, who upon his own account dischargeth himself of folly in the sight of God?

Yet a believer may say he is clean in the sight of God.

1. Clean perfectly by the grace of justification. So believers in this life are, as having no spot or wrinkle imputed to them, though many spots and wrinkles remaining on them, *the cleanness of Christ, is clean in the eyes of God; and that is the Saints cleanness.* 'Tis theirs for their use, though not in their propriety.

2. *Clean also in the sight of God through the grace of sanctification; God gives and sees, as a desire of, so an endeavour after universall, practicall cleanness in them that are justified.* A believers way in this world is clean from crimes, though not from sins. *If any man say he hath no sin, truth is not in him; and if any man commit sinne, grace is not in him, 1 Joh. 3. 8, 9. Sin lives in a clean person; but he that is clean lives not in any sinne.* And

this is a cleanness in the sight of God.

In the conjunction of these two, *My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in thy sight*, *We see the two heads of religion*, or the two main hinges upon which all religion turneth, 1. *Purity of doctrine.* 2. *Cleanness of practice.* *Holiness of life and soundness of opinion, constitute a perfect man*; Here's the character of a Christian, in his compleatness. *This was typified in the old Law by the Urim and the Thummim set in the breast-plate of the high-Priest.* *Urim typed purity of doctrine, Thummim, cleanness of life.* This *Motto* fitted not only the Priests of the old Testament, or the Ministers of the new, but befits every Christian; Every believer should bear this upon his breast, *Purity of doctrine, and cleanness of life.* Christ checks the Pharisees (*Mat. 23. 2, 3.*) who had the former, but not the later, they had purity of doctrine, but they wanted integrity and holiness of life: they sat in *Moses* chair, and therefore he biddeth his Disciples and the people, *That all whatsoever they had them observe, that they should observe and doe, but* (saith he) *doe not ye after their works*; take heed of treading in their steps: you may do their words, but not their works; why? for *they say and doe not*; though they have purity of doctrine, they have not cleanness of life. It is an ill hearing and a sad spectacle, when these two are separated. *When purity of doctrine, and cleanness of life appear together in one person, happy is that man*; and he is a fit instrument to make others happy: but where either of these appears alone, or with its contrary, as a companion, purity of doctrine with uncleanness of life, or cleanness of life with error and unsoundness of doctrine: it is dangerous to embarke with, or come near such; for themselves are in great danger. Themselves are in an ill condition, and they are fit instruments to make others worse. Unsound doctrine frets like a canker, and an unclean life is catching like a leprosie. We are aptest to take an unsound doctrine from those whose lives are clean; and we are aptest to imitate their unclean lives, whose doctrine is sound.

From the later branch, *I am clean in thine eyes.* Note.

First, *It should not satisfie us that we are clean in the eyes of men, unless we can approve our selves to God also.*

For as not he that commendeth himself, so not he that is commended by others is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth, *2 Cor. 10. 18.* It is but cold comfort to be clean in the eye of our

our neighbours, that they give us a fair testimony ; if in the mean time our own heart condemn us. Yea what though we are (like that generation spoken of by Solomon) *Pure in our own eyes*, and have a *plaudite* in our own hearts, if we are impure in Gods eye. *It is most desirable to be a white in the eye of God, while we are white in his eye, we need not trouble our selves much, though we are black in the eyes of all the world.* *It is a small thing with me* (saith Paul, 1 Cor. 4. 3.) *that I should be judged of you, or of mans judgement, yea I judge not my own self, but he that judgeth me is the Lord.*

Secondly, Observe,

What we are, and what we doe, is all before the eye of God.

It is a common doctrine, that God sees and takes notice of us. But as common as the doctrine is in the mouths of men, the use is rare in the hearts of men ; yet there is no man so heightned in grace, but may make use of it. Christ himself made use of it, Ps. 16. 8. (The words were spoken by David his figure, and applied to Christ, Act. 2. 25.) *I fore-saw the Lord alwaies before my face.* *Christ did not use this doctrine to keep or over-awe his heart from sin (he was infinitely above that) but to support his heart in suffering, as appears in the later part of the verse, He is on my right-hand, I should not be moved.* But to us it is useful both these waies, and many other waies. *The neglect of this doctrine leaves us under the neglect of many duties, and opens a gap, yea floud-gate unto every sin.* Durst any mock God with out-side and bare profession, if the heart had fed upon, and thorowly digested this truth, cleanness and uncleanness, sincerity and hypocrisie are in the sight of God ? How often do men flatter themselves with this vain hope, that their work is in the dark ; and no eye sees them ? How often doth the Church-Atheist question, like those (Job 22. 13.) *How doth God know ? Can he judge thorow the dark cloud ? Thick clouds are a covering to him that he seeth not, and he walketh in the circuit of heaven.* Sure he troubles not himself with what we do ; And though most are ready to acknowledge in words, that God seeth them, they act as if God (like the Hea-then Idols) had eyes, but could not see. It was that which Melancthon observed of the *Italians*, *You* (saith he) *are very zealous to believe that God is in the bread, but you walk as if you did not believe God to be in heaven.* Blessed is he that condemneth not himself by the truths which he alloweth,

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Forasmuch as the originall [*bar*] signifies not only purity, but elect and chosen. Observe,

Clean and holy persons, just and upright persons, are fit for choice and election.

Men may not choose, as God chooseth. God chooseth out of a common masse without respect to good or evil, as the motive of his election; he ~~doth~~ not look upon mankind, and see one pure, and another impure, one clean, and another unclean, and then chuse the clean, and leave the unclean: No (*Rom. 9. 11.*) before Jacob and Esau were born, before they had done either good or evil, That the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth, it was said, *Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated; Gods election is not upon actions.* He found them both in a like state, yet he chose Jacob. The reason of it is; Because he hath power, and a purpose to make them clean, whom he chuseth. God elects to cleanness but he doth not elect any, because they are clean, or cleaner then others. The grace of election is not directed by, but directs and leads to the grace of sanctification. But when men go to choosing, they must not take this course, because they have not this power: when men choose, they must choose upon fore-seen, or rather present works of holines and righteousness. They must chuse men fearing God, and hating covetousnes for Magistrates. They must chuse men apt to teach, sober and blamelesse for Ministers. They who cannot make men fit, whom they have elected, must consider who are fit, and then elect them.

Zophar having laid down Jobs opinion of himself, *My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in thine eyes,* (verſ. 4.) proceeds to the confutation of it in the fifth and sixth verses, which we may give you in this argumentative form.

That person is not pure in doctrine, and clean in the sight of God, whom though God hath greatly afflicted, yet he might justly afflict more:

But though God hath greatly afflicted thee, yet he might justly afflict thee more.

Therefore thou art not pure in thy doctrine, nor clean in his sight.

The assumption is given in the close of the sixth verse, *Know therefore that God exacteth of thee lesse then thine iniquity deserveth:* and is prefat'd or led in by a wish, in the fifth verse, and part of the

the ſixth, a wiſh that God himſelf would undertake Job, and diſpute with him.

Verſe 5. *But O that God would ſpeak, and open his lips againſt thee!*

As if Zophar had ſaid, *While I am about to ſpeak, I almoſt think it will be but loſt labour for me to ſpeak; yea, I think thou art beyond the ſpeaking of any man: thou art ſo obdurate and hardened in thy way, ſo wiſe in thine own conceit, ſo ſtiff to thine own principles, ſo unyeelding to thoſe better counſels, which have already been given thee, by thy grave, learned and godly friends, that I am much (and I conceive any man would be) diſcouraged to argue and debate the matter further with thee. And therefore I would willingly quit my hands of this task, and leave thee to God, I would gladly be eaſed of this burden, and turn thee over (as a man paſt cure by man) to the hand of heaven. O that God would ſpeak, and open his lips againſt thee!*

Or ſecondly, This Preface may have relation to thoſe ſecret hints, yea ſometimes explicate wiſhes of Job (declining the ſentence and censure of his friends) that God and he might ſpeak together. He only deſired the Lord to abate the dreadful ſplendour of his Majeſty, or not to clothe himſelf with dazling light, and amazing glory in that congreſſe; And, *Then* (ſaith he) *let him ſpeak, and I would answer*, Chap. 9. 15. Again Chap. 10. 2. *I will ſay unto God, Doe not condemne me, ſhew me wherefore thou contendſt with me? In both which paſſages Job ſeems to petition and preſſe the Lord for a perſonall treaty; in answer to which request, poſſibly Zophar might thus begin, My friend Job, It falleth now to my lot to ſpeak unto thee, but I ſhould (with all my heart) rejoyce, if God would grant the wiſh which thou haſt ſo often preſented to him, even vouchſafe to ſpeak unto thee himſelf. We have often heard thee appealing from earth to heaven, calling God to witneſſe, that ſuch and ſuch is thine integrity. O that God would answer thee, and give thee a meeting! O that he would condeſcend ſo farre as to conferre immediately with thee! How glad ſhould we be of this? and we beleewe thou wouldſt be as ſorry; it will be little to thy eaſe, if God once take thee to task, thou ſhalt quickly finde it otherwiſe with thee then thou dreameſt or preſumeſt, he would ſoon cool theſe heats, and aſſwage the ſwellings of thy ſpirit by diſcovering himſelf in holineſſe, and thy ſelf in ſinfulneſſe. Thy creſt will fall, and thy*

*Sane alter rem
habere intelli-
gere quam pu-
tas, non ita
juſtus appare-
bis, ut tibi
perſuades.
Merc.*

courage come down as soon as ever he enters the list with thee, and doth but shew thee who he is, and what thou art. Either of these wayes the connexion lies fair, O that God would speak and open his lips against thee!

Quis dei Deum loqui.

The Hebrew is, *Who would give*, or, *O that some body would get God to speak?* The phrase is optative, including an ardent desire of obtaining, and therefore we translate not, *Who would give?* but, *O that God!* As implying the great and instant importunity of Zophar to speed his sute, *That God would speak and open his lips against him.*

Loquuntur Deus per semetipsum, aperit vero labia cum vel hominum vel aliarum rerum opera tanquam instrumento mittitur ad aliquid manifestandum.
Aquin.

Some too critically and over-curiously distinguish between the speaking of God, and the opening of his lips. As if the one, namely speaking did import an immediate voice, when God reveals himself without the intervention of any instrument or second cause: but the opening of his lips, a mediate voice when God speaks (though in an extraordinary manner, yet) by man or angel, or any other creature, whose service he is pleased to design for such a manifestation of himself. *God can give a lip to livelesse creatures, and make any thing his tongue.* He that made mans mouth to speak, can make that speak which hath no mouth; And so, may be said to open his lips in whatsoever he useth to demonstrate or discover his minde to us by. But I passe this as a nicity, especially because Zophar imploring God to deal with *Job* immediatly, and not by the service of any creature, yet calls it, *The opening of his lips.*

Speaking and opening the lips, are the same thing under different expressions, or the later is but an exposition of the former. Opening of the lips is speaking, we speak by opening the lips; only here is an *hysterosis*, a figure frequent in Scripture, when that which is first in nature, is put last in order, for opening of the lips precedes speaking; here the method is inverted, *O that God would speak, and that he would open his lips against thee!*

O that God would speak!

כִּנֹּר

Non ad quemlibet sermonem, sed ad eum qui in iudicio habetur vel ad disceptationem spectat. Bold.

The word carries more then common talking, it is here restrained to speech in iudgement, or to an exact discussion of the cause preceding judgement. Such is the meaning of that heavenly summons (*Psal. 50. 7. Hear, O my people, and I will speak* (I will debate the matter, and plead with thee) *O Israel, I will testify against thee.* Zophar prays for a day of triall, for a little day

day of judgement, O that God would speak.

And open his lips.

To open the lips implieth grave and deliberate speaking. The Hebraisme is very frequent, *Psal 78.2. I will open my mouth in a parable.* Parables are sententious speeches, speeches filled with weight of wisdom. To open the mouth in a parable is to have an active intension of the spirit, preparing and fitting the mouth to open. The mouth of a wise man is under custody, least the treasures of his minde should steal out, or be stolne out unobserved. Precious things are not left open, they are under lock and key. He is a wise man that keeps a lock and a key at his lips. The lock of silence, and the key of speech; or the key of discretion to shut and open the lock according to the true occasions of speech and silence. David prayeth, *Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, and keep the door of my lips* *Psal. 141. 3.* as we should desire the Lord to keep or watch the door of our lips, least we speak sinfully, so we should keep or watch our own lips, that we may speak fruitfully and seasonably. The Scribe which is instructed to the Kingdome of heaven, is like unto a man which is an householder, bringing forth out of his treasure things both new and old (*Mat. 13. 52.*) He hath a store, a stock of knowledge laid up there, and he openeth not his mouth, or vents it, till occasion speaks. That counsell *Prov. 22. 17, 18.* fully reacheth this Hebraisme of opening the mouth. *Bow down thine ear, and hear the words of the wise; (what to do?) And apply thine heart unto my knowledge; (let thine heart draw in knowledge)* Let it be as a bed, or a repository for the words of the wise to rest on, or be laid up in; for, *it is a pleasant thing (ther's the treasure) if thou keep them within thee, they shall withall be fitted in thy lips; if thou keep them within thee;* As if he had said, When thou hast been a learner, and hast gained a stock of knowledge, then, *they shall be fitted to thy lips,* that is, thy lips shall bring forth, shape and form those notions of truth into profitable and savoury discourses, *They shall be fitted to thy lips.* Some speak the words of wisdom, but such words are not fitted to their lips. It is (as the Proverb treacheth) *The Ass to the harp, or the Cat to the lute. Words must be seated in the heart before they are fitted to the lips.* Davids mouth did not speak of wisdom, till the meditation of his heart had been of understanding. Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh, both good and

evil. And as a good man speaks evil, so an evil man speaks good unhandſomely, becauſe it is not in, nor with his heart.

*Sincerus erit
ſi in ſimplici
fandi notione
ſumatur hoc
verbum, quaſi
Jobi dulcilo-
quio ſimplex
Dei loquela op-
ponatur, ut hac
illud facillime
confundi dicat.*

Further, To open the lips is no more in ordinary acceptation, then to ſpeak plainly; and then it ſtands in oppoſition to thoſe eloquent orations, which (as Zophar ſuppoſed) Job had ſtudied to defend and ſecure himſelf againſt God; as if he had ſaid, If God would but open his lips, and ſpeak unto thee: one plain word might be enough to overthrow all the curious diſcourſes and ſet ſpeeches; enough to answer, and cut the ſinews of all the fine-ſpun orations, and cunning ſophiſtry which thou haſt uſed in this cauſe. Let God ariſe (ſaith Moſes) and his enemies ſhall be ſcattered. Let God open his lips, ſaith Zophar, and thy mouth ſhall be ſtopt.

*His verbis ha-
bita perſona &
temporis ratio-
ne non leviter
pungitur Job.
Bold.*

Thirdly, The words may carry a redargution of Job, as a man whom God did ſo farre neglect, that he would not afford him a word; As if his friend Zophar had thus reproved him, Thou haſt been calling upon God to ſpeak, and ſhew thee why he contendeth with thee, yet thou haſt not prevailed in thy ſute, he vouchſafeth thee never a word, but leaves thee ſtill to us. This (ſome conceive) hath a reproof in it, conſidering the times wherein Job lived; for then it was no very ſtrange thing (though it was an high favour) for God himſelf to ſpeak to the Saints his ſpecial favourites. God at ſundry times, and in divers manners, ſpoke in time paſt unto the Fathers by the Prophets Heb. 1. 1. And as he ſpoke by the Prophets, ſo he ſpoke by himſelf; God ſpoke nine times unto Abraham, as you may obſerve upon diligent reading from Gen. 12. to 22. He ſpoke alſo to others of the Ancients. And when God refused to open his lips and ſpeak to Saul, How pitifully doth he complain, I am ſore diſtreſſed for the Philiftines make warre upon me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by Prophets, nor by dreams 1 Sam. 28. 15. Saul took it not only as his diſparagement, but as his undoing, that God refused him conference. This refusal (according to the preſent interpretation) Zophar laies in Jobs diſh, Thou haſt praied that God would manifeſt himſelf to thee, and that's an honour which he hath done to many of his ſervants, in the Catalogue of whom thou writeſt thy name, and pretendſt thy ſelf for one, but he bearkens not unto thee, though I wiſh he would. O that God would ſpeak, and open his lips againſt thee!

But what is the manner of Gods ſpeaking, and how doth he open his lips?

It is an allusion unto men. Man is not able to understand the way of a spirit, but by what is common to man. A spirit hath no lips to open, nor any instruments of speech. And to speak strictly. A spirit doth not speak at all. God is said to speak.

First, When by his mighty power he forms and frames a voice, *Formatas & which is audible and perceptible by the ear, as unto Samuel, The Deo sensibiles Lord called Samuel, Samuel, and at last Samuel answers, Speak, & externas voces negare videtur. Basil. in Isa. c. 7. Quod non aures admittit.* Lord, for thy servant heareth.

Secondly, God spake to *Moses, Face to face*, that is, familiarly and clearly. This was the highest degree of revelation, and drew nearest to that which the Saints shall have in glory.

Thirdly, He spake also by many signs, especially by *Urim* Bold, and by *Thummim*.

Fourthly, God spake when he intimated or hinted his minde to the spirit of man, by the instinct of his own Spirit. Most of the Prophets heard only an inward word, which is called, *The coming of the word of the Lord unto them*. As God only speaks to the heart, while the word soundeth in the ear: So he often speaks to the heart, when the ear hears no sound. *I will hear what God the Lord will speak, for he will speak peace unto his people, and to his Saints.* Ps. 85. 8. God speaks peace when he sends or gives peace, that is, all good things. God speaks peace also, when he (as it were) by a secret Eccho, returns a word of assurance to the petitioners heart, that he will give peace. When *Zophar* wishes, that God would speak, he means it of speaking by audible voice, or face to face, not by signs or secret intimations.

Zophar being thus instant, That *God would speak, and open his lips against Job*, teacheth us,

First, *Some men are beyond the conviction of man.*

O that *God would speak*. We say of a sick man, whose disease is desperate, as in the plague, &c. *The Lord look upon you, the Physicians have given you over, they can doe no more, we leave you to the prayers of the faithfull, and to the compassions of God.* Some in spirituall distempers are so extreemly diseased, that the soul Physitian can do nothing upon them, they are past all his medicines and preparations, these we give up to the cure of God, who raiseth the dead, and calleth those things which are not, as if they were: I grant, that whatsoever healing or cure is wrought upon the soul of man by men, is from the Lord. *Man and man stand upon even ground; Humane reason and humane reason are equall; and he*

that speaks is often upon a lower ground (though he stand higher) then he to whom he speaks, and is sometimes weaker in humane reason: Now that which overcometh and convinceth, must have an advantage, and come in power, else there can be no victory. An equall (in all points) cannot be a conquerour. Hence when the Prophets delivered their messages, they put Gods authority to the word, *Thus saith the Lord*: They knew all they spake could prevail nothing. But though God give the effect of mans word to every man, yet some men appear more untractable and unteachable by the Ministry of man then others, they sit under it, & (possibly) have sate under it long, yet nothing's done, their mindes are as blinde, their wils as stubborn, their waies as crooked as ever. *Man is not any thing in the conversion of any man without God* 1 Cor. c. 3. v. 7. but some we referre wholly to God, having spent much strength and time upon them in vain. Some men have out-flood, and are the reproach of all the praies and tears, of all the counsels and admonitions of man, What can we do more or lesse then give up such (as neer lost men) to the work of God? *O that God would speak.*

Secondly, Observe, which Z^{phar} chiefly intends.

That if God once open his lips, and deal with a soul, he will quickly bring down his spirit and convince him.

Man cannot hold out against the speakings of God. Man is not able to withstand the immediate, no nor the mediate speakings of God, 1 Cor. 10. 4. *The weapons of our warfare are mighty through God*; it is our warfare, but the conquest is from God. *When he cloathes the word with his own power, and bids it go in his might, the strongest holds of ignorance and unbelief, of obstinacy and rebellion fall to the ground, like the first ripe figs shaken with the winde.* When the unlearned or idiot comes into the assembly of the Saints, *He is convinced of all, and is judged of all*; for the secrets of his heart are made manifest, and so falling down on his face, he will worship God, 1 Cor. 14. 24, 25. What wrought this sudden change? Was it the power of men? No, *He will report that God is in you of a truth.* The man perceived God was there, and upon that apprehension his heart was subdued, he falls down on his face and worships. *When God works, the work is done. He works for us, and none can hinder; He works in us, and we cannot hinder. The arm of grace in the word of God is invincible.* *O that God would speak.*

Verse

Verse 6. *And that he would shew thee the secrets of wisdom, &c.*

As if he had said, 'Tis but reason that I should call God to speak unto thee, for the secrets and depths of wisdom are hidden from and above our reason. The natural man perceiveth not any thing of God, and the spiritual man may be yet unable to perceive many of the things of God. O that God would shew thee the secrets of wisdom.

Zophar seems to meet with Jobs seeming boast, that he was one of Gods familiars, and well acquainted with his will. The conviction riseth thus, *Thou hast carried it as if thou wert of the cabinet council in heaven, as if thou hadst stood at Gods side, when he gave his orders and dispatches concerning the affairs and motions of the whole world, thou takest upon thee, as if thou wert the favourite of the great King, and knewest his heart; But if God speak to thee indeed, he will shew thee other manner of secrets then thou art yet acquainted with, thou shalt at once see that thou mistakest much, and knowest little.*

O that he would shew thee the secrets:

Or, *The hidden things of wisdom.* Here we have Zophars argument distinct from his two friends. *He deals with Job, not so much to convince him of his own sinfulness, as of the mysteri-ousness of divine wisdom.* Thou complaineest and criest out of the hand of God, of thy great afflictions: I tell thee there is a secret of wisdom in this dispensation, I will plead no other justification of Gods proceedings, but only this, God is infinite in wisdom. *O that God would shew thee the secrets of wisdom:*

Every word, and all the works of God are full of wisdom, and yet many of them are so plain and easie, that he that runs may read them. So plain and easie, that an Adonibezek may run, yea fall and read them *Judg. 1. 7.* As I have done, so God hath requited me. There was no mystery at all in that. Sense and reason have their lessons, as well as grace and faith. But as there are some lessons easie enough for sense; so there are not a few hard enough for faith. And as some sins of men are plain, very sinfull, yet very plain, while other sins lie close in the heart, and are not only an iniquity, but a mystery of iniquity, or iniquity wrapt up in a mystery (the whole body of Antichristian iniquity is a mystery) So some lessons of wisdom are plain, full of

Videtur Jobo impingere quasi illi abstrusam Dei sapientiam se assequi gloriatus fuisse. Marc.

תעלמות חכמה
Præcipua argumentationis Iſopharis hæc eſt, multa hominibus non patere, de quæ iis Deum in controversiam non debere vocari. Coc.

*Sunt quaedam
abyssi de qui-
bus disputare,
quas scrutari,
est seipsum præ-
cipitare. Sanct.
Erudita insci-
tia est, non sci-
re velle, quæ
magister maxi-
mum nos vo-
luit nescire.*

of wisdom, and full of plainness, we may read wisdom upon the very letter of some words, and in the face of some works of God, while other lessons of wisdom are hard, so hard to be understood, that none can unriddle the meaning of them. And in this the Lord maintaineth his own honour, and keepeth state; he will not have all he doth, or all he speaks lie level to every apprehension, or to be a Text for every mans interpretation; he hath some knotty ænigmas and obscure riddles to exercise the holiest wits, the highest parts, the choicest gifts of his people, yea and their patience too: they must stand waiting and expecting, yea admiring and wondering what God meaneth. 'Tis learned nescience willingly not to know, what God is unwilling we should know. They are as good schollars who endeavour not to learn what he is not pleased to teach them, as they who have learned what he teacheth them. Though his secrets be with those that fear him, yet we must fear to be among his secrets.

The secrets of wisdom here specially meant, are (I conceive) the secrets of providence: That's the subject upon which the dispute runs: God in his actings toward mankind, hath many reserves in his own brest and bosome, which no man is able, or should adventure to give any reason or account of, besides the dictate and meer good pleasure of his own good will.

Once more, *O that he would shew thee the secrets of wisdom*, is, as if Zophar had said, Thou judgest upon the out-side, thou dwellest in the bark and rinde of divine dispensations, Thou canst not look into their heart, God alone can shew that to thee. The word which we translate [*Shew*], signifies to interpret and expound that which is dark, mysterious and ænigmaticall.

Hence observe,

First, *Wisdom is a secret, or hath a secret in it.*

1. *Then it is precious.* That which is very common may be very good (as air and water) but it cannot bear any great price.
2. Then wisdom must be sought for, and *sought with diligence; If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures.* Prov. 2. 4. *Wisdom lies deep, as the veins of gold and silver in the earth.* *Wisdom is to be sought as silver.* Silver is not to be had upon the surface of the earth, there you may finde pibbles and flints, but if you would have silver, you must dig and mine for it. *Secrets are not seen at first sight*, nor found out upon the first search;

ſearch; we muſt enquire and enquire, look and look, enquire and look often, and long for the ſecrets of wiſdom. We may buy gold too dear, and be at more charge to ſeek for ſilver, then the ſilver will be worth when it is found. But we cannot buy wiſdom too dear, and the leaſt vein of divine ſecrets, which we finde, will not only bear all our charges in the ſearch, but enrich us alſo.

Again, The word is in the plural, *O that God would ſhew thee the ſecrets of wiſdom.* Hence note,

There are many ſecrets in wiſdom.

The Apoſtle (*Eph. 3. 10.*) ſpeaks of the manifold wiſdom of God. His wiſdom is full of variety, it is of many ſorts and forms, of many folds and plights. The wiſdom of God is ſimple and uncompounded, it is pure and unmixed with any thing but it ſelf, yet it is manifold in degrees, kinds and adminiſtrations, *There are ſecrets of wiſdom; when you have learned one ſecret, there are more to be learned.* As there is not only a ſecret, but ſecrets, many ſecrets of iniquity lie in the heart of man; we may go from one room of the heart unto another (as the Prophet *Ezekiel* was carried from one place to another about the houſe of the Lord, *Chap. 8.*) to ſee greater and greater abominations. Thus you may go from ſecret to ſecret, from one ſecret of wiſdom to another, and when you have ſeen both, there are yet greater ſecrets to be ſeen, beſides thoſe which ſhall never be ſeen. Some works of wiſdom are unſearchable, and paſt finding out; they are alſo innumerable and paſt reckoning up. Some things are called ſecrets, becauſe they can hardly be known; other things are called ſecrets, becauſe they cannot at all be known. *A third ſort are ſo ſecret, that it is our ſin to attempt, yea to deſire to know them.* All the ſecrets of wiſdom are in God, yet ſome belong unto us; and they are called ſecrets, not becauſe they are not at all revealed, but becauſe they are obſcurely revealed. Some ſecrets in God belong to God alone. And they are called ſecrets, becauſe they are not at all revealed. That's the meaning of *Mofes*, *Deut. 29. 29.* *Secret things belong unto the Lord our God, but things revealed us, and our children for ever.*

Thirdly, *The ſpecial ſecrets of wiſdom here ſpoken of, being ſealed in providence, Obſerve*

The works of God are full of ſecret wiſdom.

As there are myſteries in the Word, ſo in the works of God; There are myſteries in the work of redemption, the whole
G
Gospel

Gospel is a mystery. The great mystery of godlinesse, 1 Tim. 3. 16. Now as the work of redemption is full of mysteries, so are the works of providence; How many hath God posed and put to a stand to read and pick out the meaning of his providential motions? why he afflicteth this man, why he prospereth that; why affairs go sometimes forward, and why at any time backward, why the deliverance of the Church proceeds no faster, and why deliverance makes so many stops and stands, **why such instruments are laid aside, and such employed**, these pose and gravel the understanding of man: nor can we give any account of them till we go into the Sanctuary, and inform our selves from the oracle of the Word about the order of the works of God.

Fourthly, Observe, *God only can shew and teach us effectually the secret wisdom of his works and of his word.*

As we learned from the former clause, That a word of Gods speaking humbles the soul: so here we learn, That a word of Gods speaking enlightens the soul. God is the revealer of secrets, *There is a God in heaven* (saith Daniel, chap. 2. 28.) *that revealeth secrets.* I cannot interpret the Kings dream, or spell the meaning of it, but there is one in heaven that can, his name is the *revealer of secrets.* If he shew them, we shall surely see them. *Thou hast corrected me* (saith repenting Ephraim) *and I was corrected;* and if God instruct us, we shall be instructed. The dullest Scholar cannot but learn, if God vouchsafe to be his Tutor. ***He that made the understanding can make us understand.*** This is one of the articles of the new Covenant, Heb 8. 11. *In those daies I will put my laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts, and they shall not teach every man his neighbour, saying. Know the Lord, for all shall know me from the least to the greatest: God himself hath undertaken to be our teacher; though we are unapt, dull and indocible, yet, he hath promised to be at the pains to teach us.* His teaching doth not acquit us from our attendance upon the teaching of man, but assures us that he will teach his, if man doth not: and that while man teacheth, ***he will make that teaching effectual and successefull.*** When he gives us the candle or light of his Spirit to read his Word by, we read and understand. And unlesse he give us the candle or light of his Spirit to read his works by, we cannot reade them with understanding. We are as ignorant in the book of the creatures, as in the book of Scripture, untill God

God instruct us, and if he instruct us, we prove knowing in both. *What I do* (saith Christ. *Joh. 13. 7*) *thou knowest not now: but thou shalt know hereafter*: and what was the date of this hereafter? Even the day of the spirits operation in him. *Ye have an unction* (as the beloved Disciple writes, *1 Joh. 2. 20.*) *from the holy one, and ye know all things*. When the anointing teacheth we have a qualified, a moderated omniscience. He knows all things (in this sense) who knows as much as concerns him to know; And except the anointing teacheth us, we know never a letter, either of what God hath written, or of what he is doing as we ought to know. His antient people the Jews (*Psal. 106. 7.*) *understood not his works*; and he reproves them by the Stork in the heavens, by the Turtle, Crane, and Swallow, by all the Fowls of the air, as more learned and sagacious in his works and providences, than the men of Israel. *The stork in the heavens knoweth her appointed times, and the turtle, and the crane, and the swallow observe the time of their coming, but my people know not the judgement of the Lord* (*Jer. 8. 7.*) *My people do not understand when it is winter, and when it is summer, when it is a season of mercy, and when of judgement*. Some are sick, their bodies are smitten, others are poor, their estates are smitten; a third sort are disgraced, their names are smitten; but they have neither ears to hear, nor hearts to understand unto this day. How senseless are thousands at this day about the great things which God is doing among us? He works terrible things in righteousness, but few learn either the righteousness of their own waies, or the righteousness of Gods waies. Few learn either what God hath done, or what themselves ought to do. *O that God would teach such the secrets of his wisdom.*

That they are double to that which is.

The word *double*, is not here taken arithmetically or strictly, as noting just *two for one*; but by *double* is meant, much or manifold, a certain excess being put for an uncertain; it is frequent in the language of Scripture to call those things which exceed much, *Double*, and but *double*, though they exceed very much, though they exceed seven fold, yea an hundred fold, *Isa. 40. 2.* *Speak comfortably to Jerusalem, &c. for she hath received of the Lords hand double for all her sins.* But doth it sate the goodnesse of God, or his sparing mercy to punish his people much for sin, or double for their sin? Doth not Zophar in this verse argue Job into pati-

כפלי

Dualis numeri
proprie signifi-
cat duplicia.

Linguae sancte
mos est ea du-
plicia vocare
quae aliqua
dignitate, vir-
tute, aut nu-
mero excellunt
sicut apud lati-
nos res hujus-
modi Decima-
na vocari so-
lent.

ence, and redargue his impatience, by telling him, That *God exacted of him lesse then his iniquity deserved*, and did he exact of *Jerusalem* double for all her iniquities?

I answer, God is so farre from exacting double of his people for sin in a way of satisfaction, that he taketh nothing of them, not a peny of them upon that account. Christ is the only pay-master for believers to the justice of God, and he hath paid double, yea an hundred fold, in sufficiency, for all their sins. When the Church receives double, it is double, that is full chastisement for all her sins, but she makes no payment for any one of her sins. So *double destruction* threatned upon the enemy is full destruction (*Jer. 17. 18.*) And when the Church is promised *double honour* for her shame, *Isa. 61. 7.* and *double liberty* for her restraint and imprisonment (*Zach. 9. 14.*) The Prophets give her assurance of compleat honour and perfect liberty.

Again, The word *double* is put also for that which is in any kinde choice and excellent. The burying place which *Abraham* bought of *Ephron*, is called (from this word) the *Cave of Macpelah*; that is, say some, a double Cave, one for men, another for women, one within another; or as others, a fair, beautiful Cave, to which sense the words of the children of *Heth*, at the sixth verse, seem to lead us. *In the choice of our sepulchres bury thy dead.* That which is best or most is double at least, Thus the *secrets of God*, being very excellent, are double.

In spelunca duplici, i.e. excellenti pulchra & eximia. Bold.

To that which is.

לְתוֹשִׁיָּהּ

The word which we translate, *that which is*, beareth a very various sense, and so renders the text very difficult.

First, It signifies a law or rule prescribed to live and walk by: Hence some translate, *They are double according to the law.* O that he would shew thee, that his law is double, or that there is a great deal more in the law, then thou apprehendest. Some restrain this to the law given *Noah*, The seven precepts whereof are famous among the ancient traditions of the Jews. The first whereof forbade the worship of strange gods. The second commanded to blesse the name of the true God. The third prohibited the shedding of innocent blood. The fourth was against the defilements of filthy lusts. The fifth against theft. The sixth concerned judgement and justice. The seventh said, *Thou shalt not pull a member from a living creature, and eat it.*

Secundum legem. Pag. Et quod multiplex esset lex ejus. Vulg. Intellige legem Noe datam. Hugo Grot in loc.

But

But we need not reduce *Zophars* text to these straits ; but enlarge it to the whole revealed will of God , which is often called the Law of God. The Hebrew particle affixed noteth a relation, *Double according to, or, by the measure of the law.* As if he had said, Thou hast narrow thoughts of God , and of his secret wisdom in afflicting thee , but according to law thy afflictions might be doubled upon thee , God might make his little finger heavier then his loins have been. To this sense Mr. *Broughton* translates, *And that thou shouldst have double by justice.*

*Duplicia tibi
conveniunt, i.e.
duplo majora
supplicia quam
patiaris, juxta
equitatis nor-
mam. Merc.*

Hence observe,

There is more righteousness in the law of God , then man is able to comprehend.

As there is more mercy in the Gospel then we are able to comprehend (no man ever saw into the depths of that mercy) so there is more holiness in the law then we are able to comprehend. No man ever saw into the depths of that righteousness. There is an infinite holiness in the law (*Psal. i 19. 96.*) *I have seen an end of all perfection, but thy commandment is exceeding broad;* He speaks not in the concrete, I have seen an end of perfect things, but in the abstract, *An end of perfection, and of all perfection,* I have come to the out-side or to the very bottome of all (a man may soon travell thorow all the perfections that are in the world, and either see their end , or see that they must end) *But thy commandment is exceeding broad,* that is, it is exceedingly broader then any of these perfections, I cannot see the end of it ; and I know it shall never have an end. There is a vastnes of purity and spiritualnes in the law. Some narrow it up into a small compasse, The Pharisees of old with their poor impure spirits and grosse imaginations , straightned the Law into their model , and made it very narrow : They thought no man brake the Law ; which saith, *Thou shalt doe no murder,* but he that cut his brothers throat ; That no man brake the Law that forbiddeth adultery, but he that actually defiled his neighbours wife , &c. But when Christ opened the mysteries of the Law , he shewed secrets of wisdom there. His doctrine assureth , That a lustfull thought is a violation of that commandment, *Thou shalt not commit adultery ;* That an angry thought is a breach of that Commandment, *Thou shalt not kill.* Thus the Law is of a vast compasse. *I* (saith *Paul*) *was once alive without the law* (*Rom. 7. 9.*) *I thought my self a brave man, I was some body,* my conscience never troubled me, I

*Divina legis
multiplicatio in
eo consistit, quod
ad minima
quaque se ex-
tendit. Aquin.
Lex Dei curat
de minimis.*

knew not my disease, while the Law stood aloof off, and I was without the Law. (Not that *Paul* had not the Law both written in his heart, and in his book: for as a Pharisee he was bred up among the Commentatours of the Law) but he was without it, or, he was but at the out-side of it (though I give it not for the proper meaning of the place, yet in that sense also) he was without the Law, he had not travelled thorow the length and breadth of it: But (saith he) *when the commandment came*, when it came in the spiritualnesse of it, and I saw in some measure what holinesse was couched there, I was then in a woefull condition, I saw my self a lost man, *then sinne revived, and I died*; and (*verse 13.*) *Sin by the commandment became exceeding sinfull*; that is, When the Commandment was cleared to me, then I saw that I was extream sinfull, or felt the violent motions of my sin. My sin being discovered by that light, began to spit out its venome, either provoking me with fresh and unwearied assaults to commit it, or terrifying and vexing me for what I had committed. There is a multiplicity of purities in the Law, reaching the multiplicity of impurities and sinfull imaginations in us. The Law of God doth, though the laws of men do not, nor can, take notice of, and descend to the least *Items* and *punctilio's*. A man cannot so much as go a hairs-breadth beyond that which is right, but the Law is upon his back; a man cannot have a wry thought, but the Law meets with it; and a godly man (who is spirituall, and hath a new nature in him) seldome hath a wrong thought, but he takes himself tardy in it, and findes somewhat in that holy, and righteous will of God, by which he can charge himself a sinner. Whereas, they that are carnall and ignorant of the Law, can run on in a thousand sins, and never tell themselves of one, nor will they be convinced, when another tels them. *A godly man hath a preacher in his own bosome*; if he do but step aside, or do amisse, somewhat within will shew him a rule, and bring him a light to take measure of, and see his failings by. He (as the Apostle hath it, (2 Cor. 10. 6.) *hath in a readinesse to revenge every disobedience*. He findes a weapon ready to his hand in the magazin of the word of God, to avenge every disobedience of his heart; if but a vain thought arise, he hath somewhat ready to check it; such is the variety and largenesse of the Law, that it discovers and controuls every aberracion. *If God shew a soul the secrets of wisdom in the glasse of the law*. He must confesse that it is double to all he knew

knew before, from the light of nature, or from the dictates of humane reason.

Secondly, The word signifies an inward law, as well as an outward, yea the height and spirit, the extractions and quintessence of reason come under this notion. There is a reason, a prescript of reason in God. He acteth by a rule within himself, his righteous will is his rule. He gives us a law to regulate our wills, but his own will is his law. We need give no other reason, that what he hath done is right, but this, that he hath done it. We have received one law from the minde of God, but there are infinite laws in the minde of God. Thus the sense runs very clear, *O that God would shew thee the secrets of wisdom, that they are double (to what thou thinkest) according to the internall, eternall movings and thoughts of his own heart.* Hence Davids holy rapture (Psal. 40. v. 5.) *Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderfull works, and thy thoughts whics are to us ward, they cannot be reckoned up in order to thee; If I would declare and speak of them, they are more then can be numbred. The works of God toward his people are many and wonderfull, but his thoughts are more. The thoughts of God are the eternall purposes of his heart. He doth not think and then resolve, but his thoughts are his resolutions. His thoughts stand, he never lost, or laid aside any one of them.*

Prescriptum rationis quod sequi oportet in paenis irrogandis Rab. Levi. Infinita sunt in mente Dei leges, rationes, & modi quibus utitur in mortalium regimine; Qui sensus lenissimus est. Bold.

We translate, *That they are double to that which is:* The word signifieth being, or the existence of a thing; and so others render, *O that he would shew thee the secrets of wisdom, that they are double to those things which exist;* As if he had said, The Lord hath revealed and made many things apparent, but the things which appear not are farre more then those which do appear; the secret wisdom of God exceeds what he hath revealed, he afflicteth thee according to what he hath revealed, but he might afflict thee more, if he should proceed with thee according to the height of his secret wisdom. Hence observe,

Duplo majora esse iis quæ existunt. Iua. vox Thustab complectitur omnes virtutes Dei ejus sapientiam & justitiam, quæ duplo i.e. multo major & illustrior est quara nobis videtur, vel nostra ratio capere possit.

That the wisdom of God which appeareth to us, is not half, or is but little in comparison of that which is in God.

The Lord hath not brought forth all the treasures of his wisdom; he hath not stamped all his wisdom upon any thing which he hath done, no nor upon any thing which he hath spoken: It is not possible that a finite nature should receive the whole impression of an infinite wisdom. Our receipts are but drops, he hath an ocean of wisdom in himself. We are narrow-mouthed vessels, we take

take in by little and little. We are vessels of a small and narrow gage, when we have taken in all we can, we have taken in but little. *God gives us more then we receive, and he hath more then he hath given.* As the secrets of sin in man are double to those which appear, no man ever sinned out all the sinfullnesse of his heart. Though thousands have brought forth abundance, though they have acted many abominations, yet as *Solomon* speaks, There are still *seven abominations in their hearts*. Monsters and prodigies of wickednes lie in those dens and dark chambers, which the world never saw. Now as the secrets of sin in man are double to those which appear: so much more are the secrets of wisdom in God. The great God of heaven and earth hath a stock, a store of wisdom by him, which no creature ever saw or looked into, or is indeed capable of. No man, but the *Man-Christ*, hath known so much as is possible to be known of God, and most of God is impossible to be known by man. We should be ashamed, that we know no more of what is revealed. And we should adore what is not revealed to our knowledge. The wisdom of God is divided into secret and revealed; mans portion is in things revealed; Gods portion is in secret things; God hath reserved a farre greater portion for himself then he hath given unto man; that which will serve man will not serve the Lord, his portion is as much above mans as himself is above man. This *Zophar* layes before *Job*, that he might convince and humble him. Why dost thou cavil or fret thy self thorow with impatience, at what God doth, seeing thou canst not sound the reason of what he doth? thou hast not fathomed God, thou hast not reported all that God is, or hath, *The secrets of wisdom are double to that which is.*

His next words are an inference upon, or the use of this doctrine.

Know therefore that God exacteth of thee lesse then thine iniquity deserveth.

Thus he applies what he had spoken in generall. God hath secrets of wisdom, and they are double, What then? I infer this upon it, *Know therefore (O Job) that God exacteth of thee lesse then thine iniquity deserveth.*

Observe from *Zophars* method,

That truths are to be applied and brought home to the conscience of the hearer, or to the businesse under debate.

Possibly

Possibly *Job* might not have known the meaning of *Zophars* discourse; That God hath secrets of wisdom, and that the secret wisdom of God is double to his revealed; he might be to seek what use to make of this: *Therefore* (saith he) *know* (here is the application) *God exacteth of thee lesse then thine iniquity deserves.*

Exacteth of thee.

The Hebrew *Nashah*, signifies to forget, to lend, and to exact what is lent; and from this fruitfulness of the originall, there arise sundry interpretations of the Text. Many take the former sense, as *Nashah* signifies to forget, and they differ yet much in giving the meaning of the whole sentence.

First thus, *Know therefore that God maketh or causeth thee to forget thine iniquity*; as if he had said; There is infinite wisdom in God, and if he should break forth upon thee in the full lustre of his holines, and make thee remember all thy sins, thou wouldst be swallowed up in the gulf of thy own sinfulness. As no man can see the face of God and live, it is so glorious; so a sinner cannot see his own face and live, it is so odious. As God in condescension to our weaknes, shews us but the back-parts of his glorious self, so but the back-parts of our sinfull selves. *It is alwayes our sin to forget our sins, but it is often mercy in God to make us forget them.* *Know therefore that God makes thee to forget thine iniquity*; that is, The Lord doth not set them in the eye of thy conscience, nor deals he with thee, as if thou hadst committed such sins, which yet he could bring to thy remembrance, and set them in order before thine eyes. So the interlineall gives it, *Know that God doth cause somewhat of thine iniquity to be hidden from thee, or to be a secret to thee.* God doth not open the pack of thine iniquity, and shew thee all the wickednes that is in thine heart and life, God lets some of it lie hid, and be as a thing forgot, or a secret to thy self.

וְיָשַׁח
Oblivisci, & in
suo Hiphil non
tam oblivisci
facere, quam
notitiam aufer-
re significat.

Scito quod
Deus latere fa-
cit aliquid de
iniquitate tua.
Ari. Montan.

Secondly, Others refer this forgetfulness to God himself, who is said to forget the fault, when he remits the punishment. This comes up to the sense of our Translators, for when a thing is forgotten, then it is not exacted, or called for (*Act. 17. 30.*) *The times of this ignorance God winked at*; he regarded not, he looked not after what was done (that's the common exposition of the Text) God did (as it were) forget the sinfulness of those times; As

God is said to forget sin, or to remember it no more, when he fully pardons it: So he may be said to forget sin, when he doth not fully punish it. When meer ignorance hinders man from seeing, meer mercy hinders God from seeing. He is pleased to wink, when we cannot see. *When men have not much understanding what to doe, God hath not much memory of what they doe; that is, He doth not strictly reckon with them, or bring them to an account for what they have done.* Though a sin of ignorance is damnable in it self, and may condemn the sinner, yet the Lord puts a difference between sins committed ignorantly and knowingly, in the dark and in the light, between those which are committed against the light of nature only, and those committed against Gospel-light. Thus the present Exposition carries it, *Know, O Job, that God handles thee, as if he had forgotten or were ignorant of thine iniquity.* Which interpretation a learned Writer makes his translation of the Text, *Know therefore that God hath remitted part of thine iniquity.*

Scito quod Deus remisit tibi partem iniquitatum tuarum. Varab. Oblitus, i.e. partem iniquitatis tue debitam distulit. Tygur.

A third renders, *Know therefore that God hath deferred thine iniquity*, he hath put it aside for a time, and hath not called thee to a present answer. Deferring is a temporary forgetting; when a man doth willingly forget a thing, he intends not to take a strict or sudden account of it, as when he forgets unwillingly or thorow infirmity, he cannot take any account of it at all.

Scito quod oblitus est tui Deus propter iniquitatem.

There is yet a fourth interpretation given from this sense of the word, *Know therefore that God hath forgotten thee, because of thine iniquity*; and so the forgetfulness lies upon Jobs person, and not upon Jobs sin; Thou complaineest that God regards thee not, hears not thy cry, attends not to thy prayer, hastens not in with relief and succour in this thy sad condition, *Know that God forgets thee*, and he hath reason to do so, *He forgets thee because of thine iniquity.* God forgets those who have forgotten him, *Prov. 1. 28. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer, they shall seek me early, but they shall not finde me.* But hath not the Lord promised to answer when we call, yea to answer before we call? Hath he not promised to be found of those that seek him, yea to be found of those who seek him not? Why then are these earnest suitors rejected, unanswered? The cause was in themselves, *They hated knowledge*, therefore God would not know them, *They would none of his counsels*, therefore he would none of their prayers. God put them in mind, but they forgot him, therefore they put God in

in mind, and he forgot them. *Know therefore that God hath forgotten thee, because of thine iniquity.* To obey God is to remember him, and none are so much remembered by God, as they who obey him, to sin against God is to forget him, and none are forgotten of God, but for their sin.

We translate, *God exacteth of thee lesse then thine iniquity deserveth,* נשך
the word signifies also to lend (as was toucht before) so we read Significat mutuo dare & exigere, more forneratoris.
it (*Deut. 15. 2. Deut. 24. 10.*) in the laws given to the Jews about releasing: to exact lesse than due, is, to release somewhat of what is lent. The adverb *lesse* is not in the originall, no nor the verb *deserveth*, our Translators have added both in a different letter, to supply and clear their sense upon the place. The words being only thus, *Know that God exacteth of thee for thine iniquity.* Agnosce saltem exigere abs te Deum aliquid de iniquitate tua. Jun.
Mr. Broughton renders it roundly so, *Know that the Puissant will call thee to an account for thine iniquity.* Another learned Translator gives it thus, *Acknowledge at least that God exacteth somewhat of thee for thine iniquity;* As if he had said, *Doe not thinke that all this evil is come upon thee without cause, for shame submit, and confesse that thy sinne hath deserved some of it.* Our rendring alludes to the dealing of a mercifull Creditour with his debtour, who is willing to be compounded with, for what is justly owing him. Or to the dealing of a mercifull Magistrate towards a malefactor, when he layes not the rigour of the Law upon him. Thus the Jews would not exact so much punishment of *Paul*, as they supposed his iniquity deserved. The Law admitted fourty stripes: they would not go to the utmost line of justice; they, to do him a courtesie, or to avoid the suspicion of cruelty (though this mercy was cruell) abated him an ace, and therefore gave him only fourty stripes save one. The mercy of God to man runs not like this or any other mercy of man to man. 2 Cor. 11. 24.
When we say, *God exacted lesse then iniquity deserveth,* we mean, God hath not exacted half, no nor a tenth of what our iniquity deserveth. He sets down but fifty in his bill of chastenings, for an hundred, which he finds in our bill of transgressings. And this half which he exacteth is not taken either to satisfie himself, or properly to punish us, but to purifie us, that we may glorifie him. God exacteth so little, that indeed he exacteth nothing. The word is harsh and hears ill among men, but God is so good to *Israel*, that we know not how to call him an *exactour*, but because he doth not exact.

Hence observe.

First, *Every sin makes us debtors to God.*

We are in his books, and in his bonds for every transgression. All men are in a debt of duty to God (as creatures) which if they pay not, they sin, and so run into a double debt; a debt of duty, which they should have performed, and a debt of penalty, because they have not performed it. *Tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doth evil, there is the penalty.* **Creatures owe God a duty**, which they ought to pay, and sinners owe him a penalty, which must be paid, either by themselves, or by their Surety. The Apostle useth that phrase (*Gal. 5. 3.*) *Every man that is circumcised, is a debtor to the whole law.* He is a debtor in regard of duty, because he that thinks himself bound to keep one part of the Ceremoniall Law, doth thereby bind himself to keep it all; where the parts are inseparably united, we pull all upon us by engaging or meddling with any one. And he that is a debtor in duty to keep the whole Law, must needs be a debtor in regard of the penalty, because he is not able to keep any part of it. And that's the reason why Christ (who stood in the place of sinners) was put to pay both these debts, that so he might fully cut scores with the Law. He paid the debt of duty, *by fulfilling all righteousness.* He also paid the debt of penalty, *by enduring all sorrows*, even the sorrows of death itself. We do but confesse the debt, and God crosseth the book, and cannelleth all our bonds. *If we confesse our sins, he is faithful to forgive us our sins, and the blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sinnes,* 1 Joh. 1. 9. **The red lines of his blood are drawn over the black and abominable lines of our transgressions, and so the debt is discharged.**

Secondly, Observe,

If God exact not the whole debt of sinners, it is mercy.

Zophar would have Job to know this, Thou hast spoken hardly of God, because he hath smitten and afflicted thee; but God doth not exact of thee what thine iniquity deserveth; Is not this mercy? *It is of the Lords mercies that we are not consumed,* Lam. 3. v. 22. and vers. 39. *Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins.* It is mercy if life be spared. Though a man be not left a rich man, a strong man, yet if he be left a living man, yea though but a man, he hath no reason to complain, while he remembers he is a sinfull man, and is punished for his sin. It is mercy that we have not the whole debt laid upon us, If
God

God defer any time, or remit any part, it is a favour; As Christ paid, so he paid all for believers: and the damned shall pay all in hell; there shall be no releasing, no compounding of their debts. And because they are not able to pay down the full summe at once, therefore they shall alwaies be paying. *How rich is the grace which we have by Jesus Christ, thorow whom God releaseth all our debts! We must have paid all, if Christ had not paid all. Now he hath paid all, and we pay none at all. Christ having paid all for his redeemed ones, God doth not exact one farthing from them, much lesse the utmost farthing, as he will from the impenitent and unbelievers.*

Thirdly, Observe,

Afflictions are the desert of sinne.

God exacteth of thee lesse then thy iniquity, or then thine iniquity deserveth. Most are afflicted for their sin, none had ever been afflicted, if they had not sinned. The doctrine is true, though Zophar failed in his application. Job was a sinner (the best of Saints on earth are sinners) yet God afflicted Job for the trial and improvement of grace, not for the purging or correcting of his iniquity, as hath been observed from those words in the second Chapter, *Thou provokest me to afflict him without cause*, that is, without such cause as thou suggestest, his iniquity or hypocrisie.

Fourthly, Observe,

That all the afflictions of this life are lesse than our sins.

That's Ezra's confession (Ezra 9. 13.) *After all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great trespassse, seeing that thou our God hast punished us, lesse than our iniquities deserve.* Was it a touch, or some light stroke which God gave Jerusalem? Was their wound but a scratch, or their affliction little? Read the *Lamentations* of Jeremy, and you shall finde how doleful, how sad, how terrible a judgement was brought upon Jerusalem, even such, as was not done under the whole heaven, and yet Ezra saith, *Thou hast punished us lesse than our iniquities deserve.* As all the good which we do in this life, is lesse than the least of the mercies of God; so the least evil of sin which we commit, is greater than all the evils of punishment in this life. *In the life to come, God will make even with sinners and with Saints.* These shall receive as much good as Christ hath deserved for them, and they shall receive as much evil as themselves have deserved: Both are here

short of their due, yea and uncapable of their due. The Saints in this life cannot hold ſo much glory as Chriſt hath purchaſed (1 Cor. 15. 50.) *Fleſh and bloud cannot inherit the kingdom of God.* The frame of nature, though purified and purged, is not receptive of heavenly glory. Thus alſo the frame of mans nature unpurified, is not receptive of ſo much puniſhment, as ſin deſerveth. This fleſh and bloud cannot enter into the kingdom of hell. Therefore as the Saints ſhall have ſpiritual bodies, that they may be fit veſſels for the glory of heaven; ſo the wicked ſhall (in a ſenſe) have ſpiritual bodies too, that, they may be fit veſſels for the miſery of hell. Their bodies ſhall not die, their bodies ſhall live without the ſupport of natures, meat and drink, ſleep or reſreſhing. Thus they ſhall have an angelical life; and all to this end, That they may be capable ſubjects of the fury and wrath of God, even of all that vengeance, which he hath prepared, and will pour out upon thoſe who diſobey the Goſpel, and come not in to receive Jeſus Chriſt. We may ſay of wicked men in this life, *Verily they have their reward*; they have ſeen the beſt of their daies, the beſt of their ſtate; But how much ſo ever any wicked man is puniſhed, though he ſpend all his daies groaning and ſighing, though he be poor and ſick, weak and pained, though he lie upon the rack of the moſt torturing diſeaſes, the ſtone, gout, &c. yet it cannot be ſaid of this man, *He hath had his puniſhment.* A miſerable ignorant man is ready to ſay, *I hope I have had my puniſhment, my hell in this life.* Alas, poor ſoul, thou maiſt be pained here, and in hell too: thou maiſt go from rack to rack, from torture to torture; preſent puniſhments are but as a ſip of that cup, which ſhall be drunk to the bottom in hell, they are but as ſports to the pain there, and as painted fire to real fire. As the beſt of the Saints portion is behind, Their works follow them, their reward waits for them; So the worſt of a wicked mans portion is behind, his ſins follow him, his works of ſpiritual darkneſs follow him into eternal darkneſs, his puniſhment waits for him: Though his judgement be now aſleep, yet it will awake, and never ſleep, no nor ſlumber any more.

JOB Chap. II. verſ. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.

Canſt thou by ſearching find out God? Canſt thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?

It is as high as heaven, what canſt thou doe? deeper then hell, what canſt thou know?

The meaſure thereof is longer then the earth, and broader then the ſea.

If he cut off, and ſhut up, or gather together, then who can hinder him?

For he knoweth vain man, He ſeeth wickedneſſe alſo, will he not conſider it?

For vain man would be wiſe, though man is born like a wilde aſſes colt.

THe three firſt verſes of this context, are an illuſtration, or a comment upon the ſixth. Zophar having breathed out his wiſh, *O that God would ſpeak, and that he would ſhew thee the ſecrets of wiſdom, that they are double to that which is,* proceeds to prove, That it is but need he ſhould: thoſe ſecrets being ſuch, as none can ſee till they are ſhewed: This he ſets on rhetorically, with a vehemently negative expoſtulation,

Verſe 7. *Canſt thou by ſearching find out God? Thou canſt not. Canſt thou finde out the Almighty unto perfection? It is impoſſible.* In the two following verſes, the 8th and 9th he purſues the ſame argument, advancing the wiſdom of God above the higheſt heavens, and carrying it below the loweſt parts of the earth, *The utmoſt extent of things created is too narrow for the Creatour.* Mans natural wiſdom reacheth at the moſt but to the utmoſt bounds of nature. But Gods wiſdom is *as high as* (that is, higher then) *heaven, yea deeper then hell, the meaſure thereof is longer then the earth, and broader then the ſea.*

From the vaſtneſs of Gods wiſdom he deſcends to the abſolute ſovereignty at the tenth verſe, and gives an account, or an argument of both in the eleventh and twelfth.

[Verse 7. *Canst thou by searching finde out God?*

פֶּקֶד
Persecutus
est inquisivit
remota aut ab-
strusa.

The word implies exactest diligence to finde. *Canst thou by searching finde?* that is, *Canst thou finde by all thy studies and endeavours?* There is a finding by chance or accident, as well as a finding by search. Some cannot finde what they search for: others finde what they search not for (*Psal. 116. 3.*) *The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell got hold upon me, I found trouble and sorrow, I found trouble which I lookt not for, I was not searching after sorrow, but I found it.* Ther's an elegancy in the original (note that by the way) *The pains of hell got hold upon me*; so we read; the Hebrew is, *The pains of hell found me* (one word signifies both) they found me, I did not finde them. But no sooner had the pains of hell found me, but I found trouble and sorrow enough, and soon enough.

But usually the word noteth a finding (as here) upon enquiring. *Canst thou by searching finde?* *Canst thou finde out God, by thy exactest scrutiny, by the trial of all thy wits, or by the improvement of all thy abilities?* **That which is easie, is found with little search; That which is hardest cannot be found with all our search.** When God would shew the obviousnes and openness of the sin of man, he saith, *I have not found it by secret search, but upon all these*, *Jer. 2. 34.* Their sins are evident to every eye. Here when Zophar would shew the mysteriousnes of the wisdom of God, he saith, *Thou canst not finde it by the most secret search.*

Præsentemque
refert qualibet
herba Deum.

But you will say, Cannot God be found by searching? God is every where, The invisible God is every where visible. Sense sees somewhat of him, though faith sees most (*By faith Moses saw him that is invisible, Heb. 11.*) Sense shews somewhat of him to those who have no faith. **You might read much of God in the book of nature, if you had not the book of Scripture to read.** Thus the Apostle convinceth the *Gentiles* (*Rom. 1. 20.*) *The invisible things of God, to wit, his eternal power and God-head, are seen in the things that are made; And how are they seen? What? by opening their bowels, or by looking into their heart? No, If you look but upon the face, the surface of the creature, if but upon the rinde, the out-side of the things that are made, even their external form and fashion, their beauty and order draw goodly lines, and make fair representations of God himself,*

even

even of his eternal power and God head. Doe but pull up a grasse from the earth, or crop off a leaf from a tree, and you may see God upon it. How is it then said, that you cannot finde out God, no not by searching?

I answer first, We may finde God by searching, but we cannot finde him out, that is, we cannot finde the utmost of God, as the next clause seems to explain, *Canst thou finde out the Almighty to perfection?*

Secondly, God may be considered, either in his being, or in the manner of his being. In his working, or in the manner of his working.

In his being, God is easily found out: This notion lies uppermost, or riseth up in every heart; it is a principal that lives in, and cannot be blotted out of a natural conscience; *Thousands deny God, but all (who have not quite put out the very light of nature) acknowledge there is a God.* A Heathen said, *There is no Nation so barbarous, so untaught and ignorant, but confesseth there is a God.* When man fell from God, this truth stood; as when Cities and great buildings are overthrown by warre, some Towers, some Pinacles survive the violence, so amongst the ruines and decays of that perfect nature, which God made at first, the notion of a God remained. *Atheists, who would not finde God, finde him against their wills, even whether they will or no. While they thrust God out of their conversations, he continues in their consciences.* That God is, is so easily found, that it can hardly be lost; *It is found with so little study, that many who study much to lose it, cannot.*

But you cannot finde out God in the manner of his being, or what a God he is: you cannot finde out his power and wisdom, his holinesse and his justice, his faithfulness and unchangeableness with all your search; You cannot finde these distinctly in the book of nature, nor understand them easily when you finde them plainly described, and highly magnified in the book of Scripture.

Again, We may finde out God in his working, or in his works, we may see such works done, as speak a God, such, as all must say with the Magicians of *Ægypt*, *The finger of God is here*; We may finde this with a little searching, possibly without searching; we can hardly hide this from your eyes, yea, if we shut our eyes, we have much adoe not to see it. Some cannot see, though their
I eyes

eyes are open ; others ſhut their eyes , leſt they ſhould ſee (*Iſa.* 26. 11.) *Lord, when thine hand is lifted up, they will not ſee.* Some workings of God are ſo eminent and evident , that if men were not wilfully blinde, they muſt needs ſee them. That God works, that there is a divine power , carrying on the affairs of the world, is written as with a beam of the Sun. But if we conſider the manner of his working, ther's a ſecret, that's myſterious : Providence hath ſuch various waies , ſuch intricate turnings , that a ſearching man may be to ſeek about them. God doth not alwaies leave the print of his foot-ſteps , where he goeth. The way of an Eagle in the air , the way of a ſhip in the miſt of the ſea , the way of a ſerpent upon a rock , are not ſo untraceable as many of the waies of God.

Now forasmuch as *Zophar* treating of the wiſdom of God, concludeth, That God cannot be found out. Having wiſhed, *O that he would ſhew thee the ſecrets of wiſdom,* he puts not the Queſtion thus, *Canſt thou by ſearching finde out the wiſdom of God?* But, *Canſt thou by ſearching finde out God?*

Hence obſerve,

The wiſdom of God is God.

So alſo the power of God is God , and the holineſſe of God is God. The attributes and qualities of God , are eſſential to God ; there is no diſtinction between ſubſtance and quality in God ; man and his qualities are two things , man and his wiſdom , man and his holineſſe are diſtinct. Many men are neither wiſe nor holy , yet men ſtill. But God and his wiſdome , God and his holineſſe are the ſame ; He could not be God, if he were either unwiſe or unholy. *Once have I ſworn by my holineſſe,* ſaith God, *Pſalm* 89. 36. that is, I have ſworn by my ſelf , as the Apoſtle explains it, *Heb.* 6. 13. *Because he could ſwear by no greater, he ſware by himſelf.*

Secondly, Obſerve,

The wiſdom of God is unſearchable.

As they ſaid in the book of *Judges*, *As the man is ſo is his might;* ſo we may ſay much more, *As God is, ſo is his wiſdom.* There is more wiſdom of God in making the leaſt thing , then we can make out. Then, what is there in God himſelf ? If a man ſhould be examined about the meaneſt creature , Can he reſolve fully, why it is made of ſuch matter , why in ſuch a form ? Can he tell why the colour is ſuch, or ſuch the qualities ? why for ſuch uſes, and

and why unto such ends? God hath bestowed great skill upon smallest works.

Thirdly, Observe,
God is unsearchable.

Canst thou by searching finde out God? It is not in vain to seek God, but it is in vain to search him. God is *not farre from any man* (Act. 17. 27.) but he is farre above all men. When a Philosopher was asked by *Hiero*, What God was? *I cannot answer suddenly* (said he) *pray give me a daies time to consider of it;* when that day was ended, and the King demanded an answer, he desired a second day, and after that a third, till at last he gave it over, professing he could not finde out God. *God exceeds and swallows up, not only the reason of natural men, but of spiritual.* They who are enlightened by the grace of God, cannot see all the light that is in God, or all of God, who is light.

Fourthly, When *Zophar* saith, *Canst thou by searching finde out God?* He seems to imply, That

There is a way to finde out much of God, though we cannot finde him by searching.

The best knowledge of God is from his own revelation, not by our study. Would you finde out God? Do not think to do it by beating your brains, but by beating the heavens. The knowledge of God cometh down from God; we know him when he makes himself known to us. And usually he doth not make his fulnesse known to us, till we make our emptinesse known to him.

We cannot finde out God by reading, but we may by praying,

If any man lack wisdom (especially this wisdom to know God) *let him ask of God, who giveth liberally, and upbraideth not.* It was a good speech of *Luther*, *He hath studied well, who hath praied well.*

*Bene orasse est
bene studuisse.
Luth.*

Praier attains the key of mysteries, and faith enters into them. Hence, when *Zophar* had praied, *O that God would speak, and that he would open his lips, and shew thee the secrets of wisdom,* He presently concludes all searches about him successelesse, without him, *Canst thou by searching finde out God?*

Fifthly, *If by searching we cannot finde out God, then we must not boldly pry and presse into the secrets of God.*

Yet this should not quench endeavour, but regulate it, and keep it in compasse; This should make us humble, but it must not make us idle. Though we cannot know all of God, yet we are bound to learn all that may be known. It will be as much our

fin not to desire to know what we may, as to desire to know what we may not. It is our duty to enquire and travel to the utmost of our line; we must not sit down where we are, because we cannot go as farre as we would. As we must aim at, and labour after perfection in holines, though we cannot reach it; so also in knowledge. We must not rest in any imperfect knowledge of God, because we cannot know him perfectly. Which Zophar teacheth us in the next words;

Canst thou finde out the Almighty unto perfection?

This latter clause gives light to the former; For some may object: Cannot we finde out God by searching? *Great difficulties whet and quicken industry, but a total impossibility not only dulls, but deads it:* If we cannot finde out God, why then doe we search? Yes, you must search, and you may finde, *but you cannot finde him out unto perfection by all your searchings.*

תכלה The word, *Perfection*, in the Original, signifies the height, strength, or utmost accomplishment of a thing. A learned Author *quod Graci* *συντελειαν* red-
dere solent, sig-
nificat finem
vel consumma-
tionem rei.
Fuxta Apolli-
narium accipi-
tur pro praeor-
diis quasi dei
praeordia, cor-
disque recessus
penetrare homi-
ni sit impossi-
bile
of the heart; which by a metaphor signifies our inward thoughts and most retired imaginations. As if he had said, *Canst thou finde out the inmost recesses or secrets of Gods heart? Hast thou seen what is laid up in the inner chambers of his Spirit?* The heart of man is deep, only God can search it; but O how deep is the heart of God? no man can search it.

I finde a like interpretation given of the former clause, in answer to this: *Canst thou by searching finde out God?* rendring it thus; *Canst thou finde out the last thing of God?* The word (*Hakar*) which we translate *searching*, signifies the *chief and last* of a thing. And so that text of Solomon is expounded by the same Author (*Prov. 25. 27.*) *It is not good to eat much honey, so for men to search their own glory, is not glory;* so we render: he thus; *It is not good to eat much honey, but the last of glory is glory;* The sense of which reading is to this effect. The best of temporal and outward things (honey it self) if you eat much of them, will not be sweet, you may eat honey till honey be loathsome to you; but glory, or heavenly things (he takes glory for the happiness which man shall have with God in heaven, not for the same or respect which man hath with man on earth, which is the sense of our translation) glory (I say) or the state of heaven, is,
such

such, that the last of it is glory: the longer you feed upon glory, the sweeter it will be, the last bit will be as sweet as the first; *The Manna which came down from heaven was loathed by the Israelites. But no Israelite shall loath the Manna which he findes in heaven:* The last of glory will be glory; the longer we eat, the more we shall delight; the more we taste those dainties, the more pleasant will they be to our taste. Taking the word (*Hakar*) in that sense, it may be rendred, *Canst thou finde out the last of God?* And so it falls in with this, *Canst thou finde him out unto perfection?*

Unto perfection.] Canst thou come to the uttermost of what God is? or of what God doth? Canst thou know God, as we speak (*a capite ad calcem,*) from head to foot, from beginning to end, from first to last, within and without? Canst thou take in all the excellencies and dimensions of God? thou canst not do it, man, wert thou more then a man; hadst thou the understanding of an Angel thou couldst not doe it. *How much soever thou art above man, below God, thou canst not finde out God unto perfection; God only knows God perfectly.*

Hence observe,

Though much of God may be found out, yet all cannot: We cannot finde him out unto perfection. Finite cannot hold infinite. Some may conceit (but it is a meer conceit) that they can; as a Country fellow thinks, if he were upon such a mountain which bounds the Horizon, he could touch Heaven, and take a Star in his hand; but when he comes thither, heaven is as far off as it was, and the Stars as much out of his reach, as they were, where he stood before: Such are the guessees of men about God: if they could attain such a point, and be resolved in such a doubt, then doubtlesse) they should know all the mysteries of the divine nature: but if they get thither; they are as far from the perfection of God as before: for how neer soever we come to God, there is an infinite distance between us and God. Every beleever is neer God in affection, yet is he still infinite removes from his perfection, *When we seem to come neereſt the perfections of God, God goes further off from us, and we are as much to seek as ever.* When holy *Augustine* walked by the sea side, rapt in the meditation of God and of his wayes, he heard a voice which bad him *lade the ocean with a cockle-shell:* we may sooner drain the ocean with such a little shell, or with a spoon, then the perfections of God with our

largest understandings. The Lord bespeaks *Job* chap. 38. 22. *Hast thou entred into the treasures of the snow?* There are secrets in nature, which were never entred into by art: The treasures of the snow descend upon us, but we cannot ascend into the treasures of the snow; we cannot enter into naturall things, how shall we enter into spirituall? how shall we enter into the God of spirits? *Eye hath not seen. nor ear heard, neither have entred into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him,* 1 Cor. 2. 9. And if the things which God hath prepared for man, have not yet entred into his heart, can God who hath prepared those things enter into his heart? *Solomon* puts the question *Eccles. 11. 5. Canst thou know how the bones doe grow in the wombe of her that is with childe? Even so (saith he) thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all:* If naturall questions pose us, divine questions may amaze us. To know God here is eternall life, and yet we shall not know all of God in eternall life. It is our perfection to know God while we sojourn here upon the earth, yet we shall not know God to the utmost of his perfection in heaven: in heaven we shall know him perfectly, but not unto perfection: *Now we know in part, then we shall know as we are known;* that is, we shall know much, we shall know abundantly: *Now we see thorow a glasse darkly, but then face to face* 1 Cor. 13. v. 12. that is cleerly, immediatly, not by reflexion, but by intuition. Then the curtains shall be drawn aside, then all the clouds and dark vapours which stand between us and truth, shall be scattered from before our eyes: Then, the beautifull face of truth shall be unveiled, there shall not so much as any doubt interpose between truth and our understandings. Those perplexed questions and fallall controversies, which have troubled the peace of the Churches, and exercised, yea vexed the greatest wits to resolve and compose them, shall have all their knots untied, and their fallacies discovered by the meanest scholar in glory. And yet *Zophars* denying question may be put to the highest graduate in glory; *Canst thou finde out God unto perfection?* As there shall be no seekers in heaven, so, no such finders. Creatures shall there know so much of God as will make them perfectly happy, but to know God unto perfection, is more then comes to the share of a creatures happinesse. *'Tis the perfect happinesse of God, to know himself unto perfection.*

Zophar having by way of question laid down this position,
That

That, man cannot finde out God unto perfection, exemplifies it. *Altitudines cali*

Verse 8. *It is as high as heaven, what canst thou doe? deeper then hell, what canst thou know?* *Heb. Emphasin continet plurale more Hebræo maximam altitudinem significans.*

It is as high as heaven, what canst thou doe?] What is as high as heaven? The wisdom of God is. Wisdom is the soaring antecedent to this relative. The Hebrew is plurall, *It is as the high-nesses of heaven*; take all the heights and elevations, all the sphears and stories of heaven, climbe the loftiest pinnacles of heaven, wisdom is higher, or high beyond them all, so it may be rendered from the originall; *high above the heavens.*

Some Translators give us the text in this interrogation, *What wilt thou doe in the height of the heavens?* which sounds like the Apostles caution; *Be not high minded, but fear*: or like Davids humble acknowledgement *Psal. 131. 1. I doe not exercise myself in things too high for me*: as if he had said, Seeing thou canst not mannage the height of the heavens, surely thou canst not digest the height of God who is above the heavens: If thou shouldst be put to give an account of things in heaven, of the Sun, Moon and Stars, or of their motion, thou wilt be puzzled. How then wilt thou be able to give an account of him who is higher then the heavens, whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain, *1 King. 8. 17. Isa. 66. 1. who also buildeth his stories in the heavens?* Amos 9. 6. Astronomers have left us the doctrine of the heavens, they tell us of the nature and order, of the qualities and influences of those superiour bodies: but they speak most by guesse, or without book. There is no certainty in that knowledge, though some probability. Astronomers look up to heaven, but they bring little of heaven down to us. *What wilt thou doe in the height of heaven?* *Quid facies in altitudine calorum? Sept. Vatabl. Pagn. Regia.*

Further when Zophar saith, *the wisdom of God is as high as heaven*, he means, his wisdom is exceeding high. The highest heaven being the highest of all things visible, that must needs be higher then the highest of visibles, which is higher then the heavens; and because those things which are extream high affect us highly, therefore he gives divine wisdom the utmost line of the dimension. *Deus non solum in rebus creatis est, sed extra, præ suæ essentia immensitate.* August. lib. 11. de Civ. Dei cap. 5. Damasc. l. 2. de Orthodox. Fide cap. 6.

It is as high as heaven. Deeper then hell, what canst thou know? The word *Sheol*, is taken for all that is deep or low, sometimes it is put in speciall for the grave, here for the place of the damned. As we can do little in the

*Jupiter est
summus vertex
atque infima
planta Orph.
in Satur. hym-
no apud Euseb.
l. 3. c. 3. de
præpar. Evang.*

the height of heaven, so we know little of the lowest hell. Some of the upper part of the earth is to us yet (*terra incognita*) an unknown land; but all of the lowest part of hell, is to us an unknown land: Many thousands have travelled thither, but none have returned thence to make reports or write books of their travels. That peece of Geography is very imperfect. *It is deeper then hell; what canst thou know?* Heaven and hell are the greatest opposites or remotest extreames. (*Matth. 12. 23.*) *Thou Capernaum which art exalted up to heaven, shalt be brought down to hell:* Heaven and hell are at furthest naturall distance, and are therefore the everlasting receptacles of those who are at the furthest morall distance, beleivers and unbeleivers, Saints and impenitents. And as the height of heaven, so the depth of hell is ascribed to wisdom, to shew the unsearchableness of it. *O the depth (as well as O the height) of the wisdom of God, how unsearchable are his judgements, and his wayes past finding out,* (*Rom. 11. 35.*) We read of the deep things of God (*1 Cor. 2. 10.*) *The Spirit searcheth all things, even the deep things, or the depths of God.* Satan, who is full of subtilty and craft, hath his depths also (*Rev. 2. 24.*) *But unto you I say, as many as have not know the depths of Satan; This is, who have not approved nor practised the policies and devices which Satan inspires his disciples with, under the notion of profound wisdom. Deeps of all sorts lie far out of our view, and are hard to be found out.*

Verse 9. *The measure (or the stature) of it is longer than the earth, and broader then the sea.*

The former verse shewed us the height and depth of wisdom; this its length and bredth.

*Populari modo
loquitur nam
hoc spatio ac
distantia vul-
gus nihil rarius
concepit. Bold.*

*Mare & occi-
dens; quoddam
magnum
erat ad plagam
occidentalem
terra Israel.*

It is longer then the earth.] He speaks popularly, or to the shortest and narrowest capacity; man thinks there is nothing longer than the earth; The length of many parts of the earth is exceeding long: how long then is the whole earth. *Mathematicians* tell us, that the circumference of the earth is about 22 thousand miles, a vast length; and the measure is the same in the length of it from east to west, or in the bredth of it, from north to south; Every Sphæricall body is of equall dimensions. The measure of wisdom is longest, being longer then the earth, which is the longest journey man ever travelled.

And broader than the sea.] Latitude or bredth is usually ascribed

bed to the sea, as longitude or length into the earth. The Psalmist in his meditations upon the works of God, calls it, *The great and wide sea*, Psal. 104. 25. Breadth is ascribed to the sea, because of its huge extension. The sea is a lower firmament: and as the upper firmament is called in the Hebrew, *A thing stretched out, or spread forth*. The upper firmament is one expansion; so also is this lower firmament, the sea. The sea puts out long arms, and thence it is denominated *broad*. The breadth of a man is measured by his arms stretched forth, as his length is measured from head to foot: Thus the sea stretching forth its mighty arms to imbrace the earth (We commonly call them, *The arms of the sea*) carries away the name from all other creatures for latitude or breadth. There is nothing counted so wide and roomy as the sea. Such (and how much more no man knows) is the wisdom and knowledge of God.

Here are four very different dimensions met together, *height and depth, length and breadth*, yet they all minde and speak the same thing, *That the wisdom of God is infinite*; higher then all natural height, and deeper then all natural depth; broader then all natural breadth, and longer then all natural length. The Apostle speaking of the love of God in Christ (*Ephes. 3. 18.*) ascribeth these four dimensions to it, with which *Zophar* here adorns the wisdom of God, *That you may be able to comprehend with all Saints, what is the breadth and length, and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge*. Many wits run riot in Geometrical notions about these moral dimensions. And whereas Naturalists give us but three dimensions of a body, longitude, latitude and profundity, the love and wisdom of God have altitude added, which is a fourth. But all these dimensions serve only to shew the immensity both of the love and wisdom of God.

Hence observe,

First, *Mans inability to reach the perfection of creatures, should convince him of his utter inability to reach God in his perfection.*

For when *Zophar* affirms the wisdom of God higher then heaven, deeper then hell, &c. He by a lesser impossibility would convince a greater. Thou canst not finde out the height of heaven, nor the depth of hell, thou canst not take the perfect length of the earth, nor the breadth of the sea, therefore much lesse art thou able to take the height and depth, the length and breadth

of God himself, or of his wisdom.

Secondly, When he saith, that the wisdom of God is higher, longer, deeper and broader then heaven, earth, hell and sea; We may observe,

That God is present with all his creatures in all places.

The wisdom of God is every where, therefore God is. Wisdom is the eye of God, and God is said to have seven eyes (that is, many eyes, or a manifold wisdom) running to and fro thorow the whole earth, Zech. 3. 9. cap. 4. 10. There is one God and Father of all, who is above all, and thorow all, and in you all, Eph. 4. 6. God is above all, not only in regard of power and authority, but of inspection and over-sight. God stands aloft, as upon a watch-tower, beholding all that's done below, whether within or without, whether for or against the Church. There is no turning, no corner, wherein any can stand unobserved. for as he is above, so he is thorow all, and in all: He is thorow all the world by his common providence, as well as in all his Saints by his special grace. In him we live and move, and have our beings, Act. 17. Yea he is present in all places, not only virtually and efficaciously, but essentially. It is not with God as with the Sun, the Sun is fixt in its orb, and from thence sends forth its light and influence into all the world; We cannot say the Sun is every where, though the light and heat of the Sun are every where; the body of the Sun is only in heaven. Again, it is not with God, as with a King, who sits upon his throne, and yet hath long hands, and many eyes, reaching all places of his Dominion, but it is by his Authority and Commissions only. A King is virtually present in many places at once, but not personally; wheresoever his residence

Essentia divina is, there his person is, and no where else. Whereas Gods hands
tota est intra and eyes, his power and wisdom extend over all personally. The
omnia & tota divine nature is as large and vast, as the divine power. Doe not I
extra omnia fill heaven and earth, saith the Lord (Jer. 23. 24.) Once more, God
Nusquam in- is every where, not as the air is every where; The air is part in
clusa aut exclu- one place, and part in another, God is all in every place; God
sa, omnia con- is wholly in the height of heaven, and wholly in the depth of hell,
tinens a nullo wholly in the length of the earth, and wholly in the breadth of the
contenta, nec sea. All God is in all things, and all God is without all things,
propterea est he is without all things, and not shut out of any thing, he is in all
immissa rebus things, and not included in any thing, so the Ancients speak of
aut sordibus in this wonderfull mystery of Gods omnipresence.
quinata Aug.
Ep. 57 ad Dar.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Note,

God is not only in, but above and beyond all creatures.

He is higher then heaven, and deeper then hell.) So the Hebraisme) 2 Chron. 2. 6. *Who is able to build him a house (saith Solomon) seeing the heaven, and heaven of heavens cannot contain him?* God hath given a limit to every thing, but himself hath none. He that made all things cannot be circumscribed by the things which he hath made. Man makes a house, and there he dwelleth, his house shuts him in. God hath made a house big enough for all creatures, but not big enough for himself, *The heaven, and the heaven of heavens cannot contain him, how much lesse this house which I have builded, saith the same Solomon?* The heaven or heavens is the highest heaven, the chiefest heaven, the third heaven, the heaven compassing and containing all those heavens which we behold. That heaven which containeth the heavens; cannot contain the God of heaven. (1 King. 8. 27.) *God is a sphear, whose center is every where, and whose circumference is no where.*

Fourthly, Observe,

All that is done in the world, is done by the ordering or over-ruling hand of God.

God useth means, but himself is present with all the means he useth, and *acts in every thing that acts*; He that is every where can as well do all, as any one thing. A man who hath many businesses to do at the same time in many places cannot attend on all, and gives the reason, *Doe you think I can be every where?* If I was in such a place, could I be in this too? Carnall minds think it a strange doctrine to affirm, That God doth all things, and that there is not any motion in the creature, but God is in it. But what difficulty is there in this, when we have once digested this principle, That God is every where? *He that is higher then heaven, and deeper then hell, &c.* is ready at every turn to do what is done. Kings send their Vicegerents and Deputies, who do their work, while themselves are absent. Kings are not in the means and with the means which they imploy, and that's the reason why instruments work often so contrary to the minde of Kings. They not being actually present with them, cannot over-rule and order them. But God being present with all instruments and second causes that are a work in the whole world, orders them all by his soveraign will. They who act against the revealed will of God, are yet order'd by his secret will. There is nothing done

againſt the counſel and purpoſe of God, though many things are done againſt the command and appointment of God. For as he is with every hand that helpeth us, ſo he is with every hand that ſmiteth us; as he is with every tongue that bleſſeth us, ſo he is with every tongue that curſeth us. When *Shimei* curſed *David*, he knew God was with that tongue, and therefore he ſaid, *So let him curſe, becauſe the Lord hath ſaid unto him, Curſe David, 2 Sam. 16. 10.* We indeed pray to God, *Our Father in heaven.* Heaven is the throne of God, but heaven it is not the priſon of God, God is never ſhut up in heaven, though his glory ſhine moſt in heaven. But *Moses* ſaith to *Israel*, *Go not up, for the Lord is not among you (Numb. 14. 42.)* I anſwer, The Lord is not among a people when he doth not aſſiſt, proſper and bleſſe them, but he is then among them, both, to obſerve what they do, and to puniſh what is done amiſſe. Thus God is near thoſe who depart from him, as is further cleared in the next point.

Fifthly, Obſerve,

God beholds all the good, and all the evil that is done in the world.

His wiſdom being higher then heaven, and longer then the earth, brings him in intelligence from all the quarters and corners of heaven and earth; our works are before him, and ſo are our words (*Mal. 3. 16.*) *Then they that feared the Lord ſpoke often one to another, What then? Did they whisper ſo in one anothers ear, that no ear elſe heard them? No, the Lord heard, and heard it, the Lord liſtened (as it were) at the key-holes but was under the window, and what then? A book of remembrance was written before him; all was kept upon record.* And when they who do not fear the Lord ſpeak one to another, when wicked men plot againſt the righteous, or conſpire againſt the righteous waies of God; *He hearkneth and heareth*, and there is a book of remembrance kept of that too. Let them whisper as ſoſtly as they can, God can hear, and will record all their malicious ſpeeches, all their evil deviſes and contrivements againſt himſelf, or againſt his ſervants.

Sixthly, Obſerve,

There is no avoiding or getting from the juſtice of God.

God is higher then heaven, and deeper then hell, &c. Some who have done wickedly in one place, eſcape the Law by getting into another: they will be out of your bounds, and then they are

are safe, But who can go out of Gods bounds? (*Amos 9. 3, 4.*) Though they dig into hell, thence shall my hand take them, though they climb up to heaven, thence will I bring them down, though they hide themselves in the top of Carmel, I will search them, and take them out thence, &c. And *Psal. 139. 7, 8.* Whither shall I go from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven thou art there, if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there, if I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me, &c. **There is no avoiding the justice of God, for there is no avoiding the presence of God.** He hath power to arrest and attach a malefactor where ever he findes him, and he can finde him whereever he is; Though he fleeth, yet he shall not flee away, and though he escapeth, yet he shall not be delivered (*Amos 9. 1.*) that is, though he thinks he hath escaped, yet I (saith the Lord) will overtake him quickly, and my sentence shall be executed upon him. Thus the workings of God, and his wisdom, are compared unto, and exceed all the dimensions of the creature; he is above and beyond all their perfections, therefore unsearchable, therefore not to be found out unto perfection.

Zophar from the infinite wisdom of God, descends to argue his Sovereignty, and the uncontrollableness of his power.

Vers. 10. If he cut off, and shut up, and gather together, then who can hinder him?

As if he had said, The Lord is in all places, and wheresoever he comes he is within his own Dominions; it is possible for the greatest Prince in the world to travel out of the bounds of his own power. The chief Officer of a City hath great power within that City, but beyond he cannot meddle. Kings have great power within their own Dominions, but get into another country, and they cannot teach you: Should a King act his Authority beyond his limits, many would hinder him, no man would obey him. But wheresoever God acts his authority, he is in his own kingdom, for all the world is his, Therefore none can hinder him. This Zophar shews in three acts of Sovereignty, *If he 1. cut off, 2. shut up, 3. gather together, who can hinder?*

If he cut off.

The word signifies to change and alter, to put things into another

nother course to passe away, as well as to cut off and destroy; That which is cut off is changed, and that which is destroyed passeth away. We have an elegant gradation (*Isa. 8. 8.*) and this word makes the first step of it, *He shall passe thorow Judah, he shall overflow and go over, he shall reach even to the neck, and the stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth of thy Land, O Immanuel. He shall passe thorow*, that is, the King of *Assyria*, who is compared to a mighty river covering all its chanel, and overflowing all its banks, He shall passe thorow the Land like a violent torrent, he shall destroy and cut off much people in *Immanuel's* land, that is, in *Christs* land, *who is God with us*; Yet he will not suffer his people to be utterly cut off. The enemy who once associated and prevailed, shall associate and be broken, *For God is with us*, vers. 10.

And shut up.

סגר

Includere.

The word is taken two wayes; Sometimes in a good sense, so, *If he shut up*, is, if he secure any from danger, hiding them in his own pavilion of protection, *Deut. 32. 36.* *The Lord shall repent himself for his servants, when he seeth that their power is gone, and there is none shut up or left*: that is, When he shall see that none are out of the power of the enemy, none shut up in the City, none guarded and kept safe from danger, but all doors and places lying open to the destroyer, then *God repents himself for his servants*, that is, he changes his course (though not his decree) and hastens to the rescue of his people thus exposed to trouble on every side.

Again, The word is taken in an ill sense, so, *If he shut up*, is, if he restrain mercy, and expose to misery (*Deut. 32. 30.*) *How should one chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight, except their rock had sold them, and the Lord had shut them up*? How shut them up? As into a prison or under durance: except the Lord had delivered them as prisoners into their enemies hands, they had never come into their hands. The people of God are compassed about with such priviledges that they can never be overcome by man, till God with-draws his *safe-conduct*, and gives them to the robbers, and to the spoilers, *Till their rock sells them, and their God shuts them up*. It is an allusion to strong Cities or Forts, which are so built and man'd, so victualed and provided with ammunition, that it is impossible to take them in by assault or siege, unless

lesse the governour or he that hath the power of the place sell, or betray them to the enemy. The people of *Israel*, were so fortified with promises, yea walled about with God himself, that except their rock had sold them, except God had (as we may speak with reverence to his eternall faithfullnesse) betrayed them into their enemies hands, they had continued impregnable. In this sense take the word here, *If the Lord shut up*, that is, if he put men as in a prison, or into the adversaries hand, who can hinder?

Or gather together.

This act of providence is opposite to the former; by that men are shut up as prisoners, and debarred of liberty; By this they are gathered together as friends unto one society. Scattering imports affliction, and gathering a return out of affliction. The Apostle *James* dedicates his Epistle, to the twelve tribes scattered abroad. And when the Prophet *Zephania* foretells the restoration of the Jews, (*chap. 3. 17.*) he brings in God rejoicing over them with joy, resting in his love, joying over them with singing, and saying (*vers. 18.*) *I will gather them that are sorrowfull, I will save her that halteth, and gather her that was driven out.* To gather is to restore whether to civill or to spirituall society.

There are two words in the Hebrew noting Church assemblies, whereof this is one; yet it may be interpreted a Commonwealth gathering, as well as of a Church-gathering, of a civil, as well as of spirituall communion. The book *Ecclesiastes* receives its title (*Kohaleth*) from this root. Two reasons may be given of it: Either because that book of the *Preacher* is a collection of excellent observations; *Solomon* there gathered together and congregated many points of highest wisdom. Or because men ought to assemble, or congregate themselves chearfully together, to hear and drink in at the ear those excellent instructions which *Solomon* gives in that book. A learned Interpreter understands all these acts, of affliction; if the Lord cut off by sword, shut up in prison, gather together and bundle men up as fuel to feed the flame of his fierie indignation, though he doth all or any of these things, who can hinder him? The *Chaldee Paraphrast* translates, *though he gather together his armies, his military forces, though he muster nations together in a warlike manner to vex or destroy each other.*

Who

Who can hinder him?

The Hebrew is, who can turn him away from his purpose? who can stop him? The Lord hath no peer, no superiour, none to check his counsels, or stay their executions; when he hath determined to do a thing, none can say, it shall not be done, or it shall be done another way: his power is supream, and he can do what he pleaseth without giving an account to any. *The summe of all is, that God may destroy, spoil, overthrow, burn, consume if he will; he may do what he will with men and kingdoms, and no man must open his mouth against him: or if any do, it is in vain, or at their own peril.* Thus he answers Job, who complained in his afflictions, that the Lord had cut him off, and shut him up, that the Lord had gathered together armies of Chaldeans and Sabeans to destroy him. Though he do (saith Zophar) yet know the wisdom of God is unsearchable, higher than heaven, deeper than hell, if he will take these courses with thee, who can hinder him? why dost thou complain as if God had done thee wrong? when as he hath right to do what he will, and he can will nothing but what is right.

Hence Observe first,

All the changes and troubles, the good and evil in the world is from God.

If he cut off, if he shut up, if he gather together; he speaks as if there were no hand of the creature moving in any of these things, but that God himself had done all: Come (saith David, Psal. 46. v. 8.) *behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth.* See how the Lord hath made the earth desolate; see how he drives the nations, and scatters the inhabitants of the world. We have a great instance in this kingdom, *Behold the works of the Lord, see what desolations he hath made in the North, what in the West, see how many houses are burnt, how many Towns impoverished, how many families utterly ruined; Come, behold what desolations the Lord hath made. Come also and behold what habitations, what reformatations he makes in the earth: where you see these done, know it is God that hath done them, as the Psalmist adds in the next words, He maketh wars to cease unto the ends of the earth, he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder, he burneth the chariot in the fire.* Our eyes are usually much upon second causes, and little upon the first; this makes

us angry and impatient; if we could ſee God more in what is done, and man leſſe, we ſhould be much ſatisfied, or at leaſt leſſe troubled; we ſhould poſſeſſe our ſouls in patience whatſoever is done.

Secondly Obſerve.

God cannot be hindered of his purpoſe.

What he hath a minde to do ſhall be done though all the world ſay no; he gives no account of, nor can any reſtraint be laid upon his actions. If he caſt one into priſon, and enlarge another; enrich one, and impoveriſh another; give one honour, and lay reproach upon another, who ſhall ſay, What doſt thou? I have often met with this point of the Sovereignty of God, therefore I only touch it here.

Zophar in the former words moves Job to conſider the unſearchable wiſdome of God, and his unqueſtionable Sovereignty, *Canſt thou by ſearching finde out God, &c. If he cut off, and ſhut up, and gather together, who can hinder him?* Thou canſt not fathome the bottomleſſe abyſſe of his wiſdom, nor ſtay him in the reſolved actings of his power. He now proceeds to give the reaſon of both (for the connection may refer to either.)

Fiſt, He gives a reaſon why man cannot reach the wiſdom of God (*verſ. 11.*) *He is vain man.* And as man ſhews his vanity in noting more then in his aſſayes and offers to finde out the ſecrets of God; ſo his vanity renders him under an utter impoſſibility to finde out the ſecrets of God.

Secondly, He gives a reaſon why, *If the Lord cut off, and deſtroy, and gather together,* if he turn the world up-ſide down, why man cannot hinder him? *He knoweth vain man,* he knoweth that man hath no power to match his, vain man is weak man, and what can weakneſſe do againſt ſtrength, impotency againſt omnipotency?

Again, Man is vain, and therefore gives the Lord cauſe (if he ſhould deſcend to give a reaſon of himſelf, or of his actions) *to cut off, to gather together, to ſhut up;* Vain man is wicked man, he ſeeth wickedneſſe alſo; ſo that if God would not act by his prerogative, man gives him ground enough, legall ground according to the line of humane underſtanding, to do what he doth. He knoweth vain man well enough, both what he is, and what he hath done.

All this Zophar intends againſt Job, as if he were the man whom

L

God

Vanitas hominum assignatur causa cur secretorum divinae providentiae sunt incapaces. Merc. Probare videtur a Sopharo cur Deus jure possit succidere, &c. Quia omnium hominum vanitatem & secretiora dignoscant peccata.
Bold.

God knew to be vain, and in whom he saw iniquity, yea the brutishnesse of a wilde asses colt, and was about to break and tame him by those judgements. *Zophar* speaks right in this of mans nature in generall, but his cenſure of *Job*, was erroneous. He was not a vain, but a holy man, neither did God see wickednesse, but uprightnesse in him. *Grace had changed his nature; and the spirit in regeneration had blotted out the image of a beast, and stampd him with that image, which is after God in righteousness and true holiness.* And as for his afflictions they were not sent to tame him, but to try him, not to break his head-strong spirit, but to shew that he was already broken, and brought to hand, yea, led by the Spirit of God.

Verse 11. *He knoweth vain man, he seeth wickednesse also, will he not consider it?*

He knoweth.

To know is sometimes taken for a pure act of intuition; or for the discerning of persons and things, what they are. Sometimes it imports an act mixt, or made up with the understanding and affections, and then to know takes in both delight and approbation, *Psal. 1. 6. The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous*, it is the way, which himself hath cut and chalked out for them, therefore he cannot but approve it (*2 Tim. 2. 19.*) *The Lord knoweth who are his*; yea he knoweth who are not his too, but with a knowledge as different as the persons; he knows the later and rejects them, he knows the former and is pleased with them, *Gen. 18. I know Abraham* (saith God) *I, ther's a man, I know what an one he is*, he is a good man, and he is one I have in my heart to do him good. The Lord also knoweth vain man: there is nothing of vain man hidden from God, though there is nothing of vain man, loved or approved by God. *He knoweth vain man, or men of vanity*, so the Hebrew. We put it into an epithite, *vain man*.

Vain man.

כח
Proprie signifi-
cat precipitan-
tiam & teme-
ritatem:

That is, Inconsiderate, rash, heady, hasty man. With all these senses the originall word is filled. When men go head long, and without heed upon busineses, when they move without steadinesse of spirit, or an inward ballast to keep their thoughts in a due and equall poise, they are vain men. The Law saith (*Exod. 20. v. 7.*) *Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain* (it

(it is this word) that is, Thou shalt not speak rashly of the things of God, or of God himself, without reverence and premeditation, who God is, and what the errand is thou dealest with God about.

Further, The word signifies *craft, deceit, lying, any falseness, whether of heart or tongue*. The Lord knoweth the falseness, bawdiness and corruption, as well as the inconsiderateness and rashness that lies in the heart of man; some render it so here from the letter of the Hebrew, *The Lord knoweth men to be liars*, or, *those men who are liars*. Idols are expressed by this word, because they are vain, lying, false gods, *Jon. 3. 8. They that follow lying vanities* (which may be either meant of worshipping Idols, or of any sinfull way of practice) *for sake their own mercies*. So *Psal. 62. v. 9, Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie, to be layed in the balance, they are altogether lighter than vanity*. Vanity is a light thing, but these men will prove the lighter of the two. The Citizen of Sion is one, *that hath not lift up his soul unto vanity* (*Psal. 24. 4.*) unto false worship, or false wayes; he lifteth up his soul unto that which is holy, just and good, the righteous law of God.

Novit homines mendaces.

Pagn.

Homines falsitatis. Caj.

In generall, this word signifies any evil or sin, especially those which refer to injustice, or our neighbours wrong; *Psal. 12. 2. They speak vanity every one with his neighbour*, that is, they speak injuriously, every one deceiveth or would circumvent and overreach his neighbour. This is to speak vanity with a neighbour (*Psal. 26. 4. I have not sate with vain persons*, who are those? he expounds it in the next words, *Neither will I go in with dissemblers*, that is, with men who make a fair shew to their brethren, while their hearts are full of poison against them, who speak one thing and intend another, these are vain persons, and how religious so ever they may seem to be, *their religion is vain too*.

The Lord knoweth vain man, or, He knoweth the vanity of man.
Note

First, *That man is naturally full of vanity, very full of vanity*.

To be called a man of vanity, imports vainest vanity; as it imports, That God is full of truth, when he is called, *The God of truth*, and that he abounds with comfort, when he is called, *The God of all comfort*, so it is an Hebraism noting how full of vanity man is, who is called, *A man of vanity*, and how false he is, who is called, *A man of falsehood*? So the Apostle shews how full of sin that man is, how many thousands he ha

ſent, and that himſelf ſhall be ſent to perdition, whom he culleth, *That man of ſin, the ſon of perdition*, 2 Theſſ. 2. 3. They who would have ſin, and the fruit of it, perdition, let them go to *that man*. He that would have vanity, needs but go to the heart of any man for it, ther's enough and too much of this to be had in the heart of the beſt, of the wiſeſt man. Generally man hath,

1. Much falſenes of ſpirit.

2. Much raſhnes of ſpirit. And he hath a double raſhnes.

1. Raſhnes in not conſidering his end (*Deut. 32. 29.*) *O that they were wiſe, that they would conſider their later end!* Wiſdome looks to what is coming upon us, folly ſtayes upon what is preſent with us.

2. Raſhneſſe in not conſidering the way or means that lead unto a good end. Many a man ſees ſuch an end, but goes a way quite contrary, he ſets up his reſolution for heaven, that's his end, but he walketh hell-ward. This alſo is vanity, and unleſſe timely fore-ſeen and turned from, will prove the greateſt vexation of ſpirit.

Secondly, Obſerve,

God is exactly acquainted with the ſtate of man.

He needs not enquire of others, or receive information from abroad, *He knows vain man*. In the former verſes Zophar aſſerteth, That man cannot finde out God by ſearching; here he ſhews, That God can finde out man without ſearching. Man knoweth but little of God, therefore he adds, *Canſt thou finde him out unto perfection?* but God knoweth all of man, and therefore findes him out *unto perfection*. That's the oppoſition, *He knoweth vain man, thorow and thorow*. The darkeſt room in man is light to the Lord (*Jer. 17. v. 9.*) *The heart of man is deceitfull above all things*; ther's a depth in mans heart, and it is a depth of deceitfulneſſe; hence the Prophet ſends a challenge to all men, *Who can know it?* Can you finde any man able to finde the bottome of man? The bottome of mans deceitfull heart? The answer waves all man-kinde. God only takes it upon himſelf. *I the Lord ſearch the heart*. God can finde out all the deceits, and tricks of mans falſe heart: he can eaſily diſcern a Wolf under Sheeps clothing, and rotten bones in a painted ſepulchre; he can ſee a wooden poſt, to be but a poſt of wood, though gilded over, and looking very beautifull, the Lord can do it, it is at once his work, and his priviledge, *To know vain man.*

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Take the words in connexion with what went before,
He cutteth off, shutteth up, and gathereth together, For the Lord knoweth vain man.

Hence observe,

That God is led by his knowledge to doe whatsoever he doth.

When we see so much confusion, such cutting off, such shutting up, such gatherings in the world, we are apt to think no account can be given of these things. Yes, *God knoweth vain man*, he doth not work at a venture: he sees *that* in man, which justifies him in all the works he doth among all the children of men.

Further, From the connexion, we see the cause of all the troubles which are in the world; of cuttings off and shuttings up, of destructions and devastations: *The Lord knoweth vain man*. It is the vanity of man, which subjects the creature unto vanity, *Rom. 8. The creature groaneth*; we hear creatures groan, Kingdoms and Nations groan, when God cutteth off, and shutteth up, and hudleth them together; But what causeth this doleful groan? Is it not the sin of man? Vain man brings in all these vanities into the world. *We may see the seed of all our troubles in our sins*; The nature of man gives you an account of these workings of God. There is warre, there is famine, and ther's the plague, there are divisions, there vexations, between man and man, friend and friend, Kingdom and Kingdom. All these breed in the heart of man. The Prophet (*Jer. 4. 18.*) speaking of judgements then abroad, saith, *Thus is thy wickednesse, because it is bitter*. Troubles are alwaies bitter, often very bitter; But would you know whence this bitternesse is, and how to call it? *This wormwood is wickednesse*; You may read what you are, and what you have done, in what you feel and suffer. *Mans sufferings are so much from his sin that they are called his sin.*

He seeth wickednesse also.

That's a second step.

He seeth.

To know is an act of the understanding; to see is an act of sense. These in God are not distinguished, his eye is his understanding, his sight his knowledge. *Zophar* puts it under distinct terms, to shew the exactness of Gods knowledge, *He knoweth vain man, and he seeth*. That knowledge which we have by sight, hath a three-fold advantage of any other natural knowledge. It is

1. The easiest
2. The speediest
3. The surest

} knowledge.

Videt non discet
Coc,

An eye-witnesse is farre more authentick then an ear-witnesse is. *God seeth*, He doth not trouble himself to dig down into a matter by tedious inquiries, he needs no *Committee of Examinations to make discoveries*, he needs not pump and fetch up the hearts of men; *He seeth what waters are in that fountain*, he seeth, he doth not learn. And what doth he see? *He seeth*

Wickednesse also.

Intrinsecam
malitiam ac
mentale deside-
rium ad ma-
lum importat.

IN The word is sometimes taken for internal wickednesse, that stock and masse of corruption, which lies close within us; and so it falls in with the former expression, the vanity of mans nature.

But besides, It notes any external evil, and so there is a difference, *The Lord knoweth vain man*, what his nature is, and he *seeth wickednesse*. All the actings of vain men, all the evil counsels and crooked conveyances of their lives, whatsoever wickednesse they do, is immediately before his eye. The Lord knows the vanity that dwels in the heart, and sees the wickednesse that is acted by the hand.

In propriety, the word imports that which is *without reason*; wicked men are unreasonable, or *absurd men*, that's the Apostles character of them (2 Theff. 3. 2.) They can give no account why they are wicked, neither of the end they propose, nor of the means they use. There is no reason in what they doe, nor can they give any true reason why they doe it. Sin is an absurdity both waies, *He seeth wickednesse*.

Hence observe,

All the movings of the sons of men in the waies of sinne are evident to God.

He seeth them. What we doe, we doe in the eye of conscience; and though conscience be now asleep or blinde in the sinners eye, yet conscience hath an open Eagle-eye upon every sin. Now if conscience seeth wickednesse, God seeth it much more; *If our heart condemns us* (and that it could not doe, unlesse it see us) *God is greater then our heart, and knoweth all things*, 1 Joh. 3. 20. *Take heed of endeavouring to hide sin from God, or of hoping you sin unseen.* That was good counsel which one of the Ancients gave, *It is best to shew that unto God, which we cannot hide fro*

from him. Shew your wickednesse unto God by confessing it, for you cannot hide it from God by denying or excusing it, *He seeth wickednes also.* There is yet a third act inferred upon the former two.

Will he not then consider it?

Many a carelesse man, knoweth and seeth his own wickednes, or the wickednes of others, but he laieth neither of them to heart: But do you think that God knoweth and seeth wickednesse after the rate of carelesse men? Doth he know and see and not regard? No, *He considers it.* And Zophar is not satisfied to say, *He considers it,* but he puts it home strongly with a Question, *Will he not consider it?* Yes, he will, certainly he will consider the vanity and the wickednesse of man, because he knoweth the one, and seeth the other. What is not known and seen, cannot be considered. One or both those acts are precedaneous to consideration; but some see and know what they never consider; consideration doth not alwaies follow those acts. God looks weightily upon the world, he sees judiciously, critically, he doth not look upon men to gaze at them, but to discern, try, and judge them.

The Hebrew word signifies a clearnesse of observation, and a רִיב strength of judgement about the things which are seen, or an act of discerning arising from greatest attention and meditation, *Psalm 37.10. Thou shalt diligently consider his place,* saith David, prophesying the utter ruine and abolition of a wicked man, though he flourish, yet it is but for a while, anon he is gone, and when he is gone, though thou diligently consider his place, though thou sit down and mark how this man lived, and what he was, yet scarce any foot-steps of him will be found, *It shall not be.* The word is used to the same sense (*Levit. 10. 10.*) where laws are given to the Priests about discerning the defilements of the people, *That they might put difference between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean:* So to consider as to see a difference between person and person, state and state, is diligent consideration. Thus God *considereth.* he distinguisheth man and man, the waies of one man from the waies of another, and the way of every man in it self: He knoweth man as a Judge knoweth upon triall and examination of witnesses, with all the circumstances of the fact.

Zophar

Zophar in this ſeems to touch Jobs ſuppoſed hypocriſie ; As if he had ſaid, Poſſibly thou preſumeſt to impoſe upon God, or put him off with fair ſhews, but thou wilt be deceived, he trieth the ſpirits of the children of men, he weighs all their actions, he will weigh thee out to a grain, he will diſcover the leaſt error and variation from the rule. Therefore never think by thy flouriſhes of profeſſion and out-ſide devotion to deceive him. He knoweth vain man, and ſeeth wickedneſs, Will he not then conſider it ?

Hence obſerve,

God doth not only know and ſee, but he takes deep conſideration of mens wickedneſſe.

The Prophet calls the Jews to conſider their waies (Hag. 1.7.) as if he had ſaid, I know you have kept many faſts, you have confeſt your ſins, and often arraigned your ſelves in the ears of heaven, but all this while you have not conſidered them, Goe now and conſider your waies. God conſiders your waies, and will not you ? Gods conſideration is not a bare knowledge of the fact. He conſiders the perſon who, the place where, the time when the fact was committed. He conſiders the means and admonitions, the warnings and cautions, the threatnings and the judgements which providence adminiſtered to prevent it. All theſe are brought into the reckoning, where there is (ſuch as Gods is) a full conſideration. Now conſider this, ye (inconſiderate ones) that forget God, leſt he tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver, Pſal. 50. 22.

Secondly, To conſider a thing, is to puniſh it. And ſo it answers the former verſe, The Lord cutteth off, and ſhutteth up; he makes ſtrange work in the world, Why ? He knoweth vain man, and he ſeeth wickedneſſe alſo, Will not he then conſider it ? that is, Is it poſſible he ſhould know and ſee ſo much wickedneſſe, and not puniſh it ? As we ſay to thoſe under our power concerning the faults which we know them guilty of, Well, there will come a time when we ſhall conſider this, that is, A time will come, when we ſhall puniſh you for this, you ſhall finde and feel what you have done. Thus God conſiders the ſins of men.

Hence note,

The evils which God knows and ſee, he will certainly puniſh.

Amos 3. 2. You only have I known of all the families of the earth, therefore I will puniſh you for all your iniquities. God knows all the families of the earth, as to know is a work of the underſtanding,

ing, but he knoweth only some (and then he knew but one family of the earth, that of the Jews) as to know is a work of the affections, fruited with works of speciall mercy; When the Lord saith to *Israel*, You have I known, he means, I have shew'd you mercy, I have done you good above all the families of the earth, but now I will bring evil upon you. *Abused mercy turns to wrath, and the greater the mercy abused is, the greater is the wrath.* The Lord will not cocker his own children, His nearest people, who lie in his bosome, shall have stripes for their sins, and broken comforts for broken Commandments. Will the Lord thus consider the failings and backslidings of his professed friends, and will he not consider the wickednesses of his professed enemies? When *Jehu* was upon the execution of Gods design against the house of *Ahab*, and had slain *Foram* his son, he thus bespoke *Bidkar* his Captain, *I remember how the Lord laid this burden upon him, Surely I have seen the bloud of Naboth, and the bloud of his sons, said the Lord, and I will requite thee in this plot, 2 King 9. 29. I have seen.* God saw, and he saw with an eye of vengeance. He saw bloud to requite it with bloud (*Psal. 10. 11.*) *The wicked hath said in his heart, God hath forgotten, he hideth his face, he will never see it.* There's self-flattery at the highest: Hence the conclusion is ready *vers. 13. The wicked contemns God, he hath said in his heart, Thou wilt not require it.* This is the language of a wicked heart. But what saith the heart of *David*, the next words are the language of his heart, *Thou hast seen it, for thou beholdest mischief, and spight, to requite it with thy hand:* As the hearts of men differ, so do their opinions: An evil heart, will not allow God to be a beholder of evil: A good heart is assured that he is not only a beholder, but an avenger of evil. *Let no man deceive you* (saith the Apostle, *Ephes. 5. 6.*) *with vain words* (And let no man deceive himself, say I, with vain hopes) *for because of these things the wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience.* Disobedience is the forerunner of wrath, where sin opens the door, judgement will enter (*Psal. 34. 16.*) *The face of the Lord is against them that doe evil.* The face of the Lord is either his anger or his knowledge, *The face of the Lord is against them*, that is, He seeth, and his wrath goeth forth against what he seeth. Seeing them, he is against them; They (perhaps) have cast their own sins, as well as the word of God behinde their backs. But God hath not cast their sins behinde his back, *his face is against them*; and what to

do? To cut off the remembrance of them from the earth. The anger of God is sharp, sharper then a two-edged sword, it doth not only cut, but cut off, it cuts off branch and root, wicked men, and their remembrance from the earth. Then God remembers sin indeed, when he doth not leave a remembrance of the sinner. There was never any sin committed in the world, but God considered it to punish it. **The sins of beleivers are considered and punished upon Jesus Christ; Justice went forth against Christ, he was arrested for our debt, and discharged it with the full consideration.** Believers may tell God, That Christ hath given him consideration for all their sins. And God tels unbelievers that they must pay the consideration themselves. The holy God cannot see the unholliness of man, and not consider it. Man makes no great matter of sin, but God doth. Man thinks himself good enough, though he be stark naught, and wise enough, though he be a very fool. The next verse leads us into that meditation.

Verse 12. For vain man would be wise, though man is born like a wilde asses colt.

For vain man.

נָכוֹן The Hebrew word signifieth, hollow or empty, any thing which hath nothing in it, and so a person who hath (as we say) nothing in him. The French call such persons *Fols*, which comes near in sound to our English word *Fools*, but their language takes it up from the latine word *Folles*, signifying a pair of bellows, because the men they mean to decipher by it, are like a pair of bellows, sending out nothing but a blast of winde or air. The word of the text is of the same intendment with *Racha*, of which we reade *Matth. 5. 22.* *He that shall call his brother Racha, &c. that is, an empty man, a man empty of worth and wisdom, a man that hath no brains in him (as we say) or no goodnesse, such a man as this is Racha, and he is Nabub too, an empty, hollow fellow.*

Significat concavum, vacuum nullam habens soliditatem: hinc notat stolidos, vanos, qui ad instar vasis in quo nihil est vacui dicuntur, sc. cerebro & sapientia. Galli vocant tales fols, quasi folles instrumentum tum quod nihil continet, nisi aerem. Bold. *Racha eandem habet significationem a רִיקָה evacuare.*

Hence observe,
A vain man is an empty man.
He hath nothing in him, but that which is good for nothing. There is no natural vacuum (as Philosophers speak) in any part of nature. Neither is there a moral vacuum in any man. But a thing or person is then said to be empty, when void of that with which it should be fil'd; that which hath not the filling, which of

of right or duty, which according to its own constitution, or the just expectation of others, it should have, is empty. The stomach is empty when it hath no meat in it, though it be full of winde. Man is called empty, because (though as full of evil as an egge of goodness, yet) he is not fill'd with good, he is not fill'd with God, with the knowledge of God, with love to, and faith in God. So the Apostle James bespeaks him Chap. 2. 20. *But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?* As if he had said, *Thou empty man, thou that hast but a boast of faith, thou whose faith is fill'd up with good words, not fruited with good works, wilt thou know (thou shalt, whether thou wilt or no) that thy faith is dead.* Where there is life, there is operation; works are not the form but they are the fruit of faith: they are not the essence of a living faith, but they are the evidence that faith lives; and he is to be numbred among the vaineft of men, who speaks of his faith, while his works are altogether speechless, or speak nothing but unbelief.

When man fell from God, the devil emptied him of that which he was full of, the image of God in uprightness, and fill'd him with that which was but emptinesse, his own image, in unrighteousness. The nature of fallen man in the best notion of it, is but *white paper*; in which nothing is written; in another notion it is *black paper*, written, or blotted rather with evil. And though some notions and general principles (from which conscience works to conviction) remain there, yet they are so weak and languid, so like sparks covered over with, or rather buried in embers and ashes, that they are scarce discernable, and are not only utterly unable without assistance to discern between common truth and error, good and evil, but quite dead to spiritual good. Hence though man hath not lost all, yet he hath as bad as lost all, because he hath lost that which was best, or should make him fit to act that which is good. Things which act not, are but very little better then those which are not. *Man having totally lost all holy habits, and all power to act in, or toward holinesse, is not wronged, when he is called, vain empty man.*

And as he is vain, because empty of what he ought to have, so he is more vain, because full of all that which he ought not to have. This empty fulnesse the Apostle describeth (*Rom. 1. 29, 30.*) *filled with all unrighteousnesse, fornication, wickednesse, covetousnesse, maliciousnesse, full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity, with such stuff as this he is filled, of this chaffe and cockle he hath good*

measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over to give into your bosome. The heart of man at the best of nature, is but like a childes pocket full of stones and balls and bables. How empty is that heart which is thus filled? The understanding of man which hath not one holy sentence written in it, is yet written all over with unholy sentences, his judgement and conscience are defiled and flie-blown with false principles, with lies and errors, and if there be any truth there, it is about such things as make him little the wiser, and never a whit the better. Vain man is empty man, unlesse to be full of vain things, or a fulnesse of evil things (which are worse then emptines) may go for fulnesse.

Would be wise.

אִישׁ נָבוֹב
יָלֵב

*Vir vanus cor-
dabitur, vel
cordatus effi-
ciatur.*

*Cor est sedes sa-
pientia, unde
pro sapientia
ponitur.
Vir vanus in
superbiam eri-
gitur. Vulg.*

*Quanto stupi-
diora sunt bru-
ta tanto cras-
siores pollent cor-
de. Plin.
Cordare nihil
aliud est, quam
ingeniosum, sa-
pientem magni-
que consilii vi-
rum evadere.*

There is an elegant *Paranomasia* in the Hebrew, which our language doth not admit: but the littoral sense runs thus, *Vain man would have a heart.* This gives us a further evidence, what this vain man is; he is a man without a heart. Ephraim was a silly Dove without an heart (Hos. 7. 11.) without judgement to know, and without courage to doe the will of God: here, *vain man would have a heart.* He would be wise if he knew how. The heart is the seat of wisdom, therefore we render it well, *Vain man would be wise.* Mr. Broughton thus, *Vain man would be made hearty:* And the Vulgar, *Vain man is raised up to pride,* or as our Proverb speaks, *Takes heart a grasse.* As the heart is the throne of knowledge, so knowledge (unlesse sanctified) is usually a step to pride; Bare knowledge is windy, it puffeth up (1 Cor. 8. 1.) They who are not edified by knowledge, are elated by knowledge. We have cause to be humbled, because we know so little, and if we once know much, it is alwaies a temptation to, often a cause of pride.

But to our reading, *Vain man would be wise, he would have a heart.* Naturalists observe, That, those creatures which have the the thickest and grossest hearts in bulk, are the most stupid and uningenious. But to have a great heart in a moral sense, noteth greatest wisdom, noblest ingenuity, and (in Scripture language) purest holinesse, Prov. 15. 32. *He that heareth reproof getteth understanding,* so we translate; The Hebrew is, *He that heareth reproof possesseth a heart,* or, *getteth a heart.* A man that will not be reproved, hath lost his heart as well as his ear; have but a patient ear

ear to hear, and you may get a heart to know: understanding and knowledge, yea and grace too, come in at the ear.

Vain man would be wise, and is not this a good woulding? Is it any part of mans folly that he would be wise? What can be better wished then wisdom? *Solomons* prayer was for a heart. When God gave him a blank from heaven, and said, *Ask what I shall give thee*; He said, *Give thy servant an understanding*, or (according to the letter of the original) *an hearing heart*, 1 King. 3.5, 9. And was *Solomon* called *vain man*, because he would be wise? Was not his election highly approved by the only wise God? How then is it, that *Zophar* upbraids *Job* with this design, and closely taxeth him as a vain man, because he would be wise?

I answer, To desire to be wise is a great point of wisdom, and whereas *Zophar* makes it a fault, That *vain man would be wise*, the faultiness must be found in one or both of these senses.

First, When man would be accounted wise, and affects the reputation of wisdom, more then the reality of wisdom. When he doth not so much care to be wise, as to be thought wise. The name is better to him then the thing. *Many have a great opinion of their own wisdom*, and would have others take up that opinion of them too. *Wisdom is the best thing*. And these think themselves well enough, if they flourish in the thoughts of others for wise men. The reputation of wisdom pleaseth them as much as the enjoyment of it. Thus, to have an itch to be esteemed wiser then we are, or wise when we are not, is the greatest piece of folly. It is a loud vanity to affect an opinion of wisdom among others, or to have an high opinion of our own wisdom. Thus vain man would be wise, and it is his vanity that he would.

Secondly, Man is vain when he would be wise beyond his line, or in things above him, not in things about him or fit for him. The scope of the place leads us to this Exposition. *Canst thou by searching finde out God? Canst thou finde him out to perfection? He is as high as heaven*, &c. Though such knowledge of God be too high for any man, yet vain man offers at it, and thinks he knoweth nothing, if he know not something which he ought not to know. *Man naturally desires forbidden wisdom*, and his desire is seven times stronger after it, as it is *forbidden*, then as it is *wisdom*. Many will not hear wisdom when she calls, who yet would be wise in that which they have no call to. *An evil heart cannot desire any good, but for the sake of some evil that comes with it*. The devil

tempted man to be wise in a way of sin. The first sin came in by an attempt to get forbidden wisdom, *When the woman saw, that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eye, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, &c. Gen. 3. v. 6.* But what was the wisdom which the woman expected from the fruit of this tree? It was not wisdom to know God, but to be as knowing as God: so the Tempter promised, *Ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil*, vers. 5. To know God is eternall life, but a desire to know, as God, brought in eternall death. The Apostle cautions, *not to be wise above that which is written*, and adviseth *Rom. 12. 3. To be wise unto sobriety*. There is an intemperance of the understanding, as well as of the affections. There are two extreames about wisdom, Neglect and affectation. One cares not to know what is necessary, what may make him holy, and bring him near to Christ. Another cares only to know unnecessaries. His wisdom and learning lies in canvassing *foolish and unlearned Questions*, which *Paul* bids *Timothy* avoid, *2 Tim. 2. 23.* He pleases himself with crotchets and curiosities, with meer notions and niceties; about these his imagination waxes wanton, and runs riot, yea mad. Or, he must be breaking open of Gods cabinet, entring into his counsels, prying into his Ark, he thinks he knoweth nothing worthy a man, unlesse he know that which is above man. Thus also *vain man would be wise*, and it is his vanity that he would.

Though he be born as a wilde asses colt.

Hic vertitur
pullus tamen
ejusmodi esse
constat, qui
oneribus ve-
hendis & agri-
culturae aptus sit.

That is, like a wilde asse, as son of man is not a young man, but a man; so the *asses colt* is not a young asse, but an asse, any asse. The word is often used for asses under burthen, and fitted for use, which colts are not, *Gen. 49. 11. Binding his foal unto the vine, and his asses colt unto the choice vine*, there to take up their burden, and undergo their labour. So then, when he saith, *Vain man would be wise, though born like a wilde asses colt*, his meaning in plain English is only this, man would be very wise, wiser then man, he would be thought as wise as God, at least he would search out the wisdom of God, and yet indeed *he is a beast*; and *Zophar* instanceth in the wilde asse among all beasts, because the asse among beasts and the wilde asse among asses is furthest from wisdom. Some beasts have a kinde of knowledge, and are very teachable, but the wilde asse is not guilty of either. A man of weakest parts and thinnest

thinnest intellectuals is in scorn (though not without blame) called an asse; as a crafty man is (without blame) called a fox.

Man hath wit and subtilty for the world, and to contrive for his lusts, but being degraded from that dignity of a son of God, he walks more like a beast then a man towards God. *Eccl. 3. 18.* *I said in mine heart concerning the estate of the sons of men, that God might manifest them, and that they might see that they themselves are beasts. That they might see; How shall they see it? They will not see it till they are shewed it, and scarce then. I said in mine heart that God would manifest this to them, that they themselves are beasts. As whatsoever good we have, comes from God, not from nature, so it is from God that we must learn the badness of nature. Man is so much a beast, that he cannot know himself to be one till God teach him. And we never learn to be men, till we have learned that we were beasts. Man was made like unto God, but man hath made himself like unto a beast. In three respects man is born like a wilde asses colt, or like a beast.*

*Ad majorem
stupiditatem
declaram.
אמר
Vertitur onager,
qui est asinus
silvestris.
Merc.*

1. In regard of his ignorance; Knowledge is proper to those who have reason, yet some who have reason have scarce any thing which can be called knowledge. And though grace repair the image of God in knowledge, yet the best of men may confesse with *Agur* *Prov. 30. 2.* *Surely I am more brutish then any man, or (more near the Hebrew) then a man, and have not the understanding of a man.* Wicked men are more brutish then beasts, and holy men are more brutish then a perfect man. The best have somewhat of the beast in them, because they have not the whole understanding of a man in them. *David* charges himself for one *sinfull act*, much more then is it true of a *sinfull state*, *So foolish was I, and ignorant, I was as a beast before thee, Psal. 73. 22.* His dissimulation carries the same meaning, *Psal. 22. 9.* *Be not as the horse, or as the mule which have no understanding.* And so doth his conclusion (*Psal. 49. 20.*) *Man that is in honour and understandeth not, is like the beasts that perish.* Not as if he meant it of men quite rob'd of reason. This *not understanding* is to be restrained to the duty of their high place, and the providence of God in raising them to it. He that understands not who raised him to honour, and what his honour leads him to, is the more like or below a beast, because he is so much above other men, *Of all fools a fool in honour looks most unlike a man.*

2. Man is like a beast, or like that beast here expressed, for wantonnesse, lust and vanity. The Church of the Jews in her defection to idolatry is compared to a dromedary and a wilde asse (Jer. 2. 23, 24.) *Thou art a swift dromedary, traversing her waies, a wilde asse (or, O wilde asse, so some translate it) used to the wildernesse, that snuffeth up the winde at her pleasure, in her occasion who can turn her away? All they that seek her will not weary themselves, in her moneth they shall finde her.* The Prophet describeth the spiritual wantonnesse of that people in their idolatrous and superstitious mixtures by the natural wantonnesse of the asse, *In her occasion who can turn her away?* she is not to be medled with, when the fit's upon her. *All they that seek her will not weary themselves,* they desist from pursuing her, knowing they may tire themselves, but not take her with all their travel, till somewhat hath tamed her; Then, *In her moneth they shall finde her.* Not that the wilde asse (as an old Rabbin dreams) useth to sleep one whole moneth of the year, and then the hunters used to catch them napping. I shall remit this among Jewish fables. But the *moneth* she is to be found in, may be the moneth near her sorrows, when her burden takes off her speed, and makes her more easie to be brought to hand. Some reade the text differently, yet the sense is the same. *All they that seek her need not weary themselves, In her moneth they shall finde her.* As if he had said. A little labour will serve to catch her, she is to be had with ease, when or where her lust is to be satisfied. Like this wilde asse were the people of Israel in spiritual wantonnesse, *so set upon it*, that none could turn them from it: The prophets wearied themselves in vain to reclaim them from that lewdnesse; *So prone to it*, that none needed to weary themselves to get their good-will, they did even prevent wooing, and went up to the bed of love, or of mysticall fornication with the Nations round about, as soon as they did invite, but with a glance of the eye. And as they were like the wilde asse for spiritual, so they, together with the most of mankind, have undergone as mean a comparison for their pronenesse to, and violent pursuit of corporal wantonnes and uncleannes.

3. *Man is like a wilde asse, In regard of stubbornness and unreachableness.* Wilde asses are as untractable, as almost any creature. Naturalists tell us, They are all for liberty. The wilde asse is not used to burthens, or brought to hand; he or she are not fed at rack and manger, they eat what the wildernesse affords, and

and are not under any mans care or government; God himself hath given us this character of the wilde asse in this Book (*Job 39. v. 5.*) *Who hath sent out the wilde asse free? What masier hath the wilde asse been apprentic'd to? or who hath loosed the bands of the wilde asse? (from whose hand hath he received his Indentures, or been manumitted?) Whose house I have made the wildernesse, and the barren land his dwellings. He scorneth the multitude of the City, neither regardeth he the crying of the driver.* The horse and ox must serve, the horse travels, and the ox tills the ground: the ox is under a yoke, and the horse hath a bit and bridle to keep him in subjection, but the wilde asse regardeth not the driver, he cares neither for his whip, nor for his whistle. He is altogether a stranger to discipline, and likes not to hear of any master but himself, or to be a servant to any but his own will. Such is the nature of man, *Man is born like a wilde asses colt*; he loves to be free, or rather to be dissolute, he cannot endure to be subdued to order; he would know no law but his own lust, nor rule but his own desire. Every man is of himself, *A sonne of Belial, A sonne without a yoke.* Man is so much for sinfull liberty, that he cares not for true liberty. The liberty he seeks, makes him a bond-slave to corruption; Thus man is born a wilde asses colt, he is ignorant, wanton and licentious.

So much for the words as we translate.

There is yet another reading of good ase, and worthy our examination. 'Tis given out thus, *So shall vain man be made wise, and the asses colt shall be born a man.* This rendering may bear a double interpretation.

First, It may be understood *Ironically*, as a scorn put upon Job, and upon all such as Zophar supposed him to be, vain men. *Vain man shall be made wise, when an asses colt is made a man*; that is, *He shall never, or very hardly be made wise*; as if he had saith, *It is as unheard of, and as strange a thing that such a man as thou, a man so proud, and high in thine own thoughts, so vain in thy imaginations, that such an one as thou shouldst be made wise or holy, as it is for a wilde asse to be made a man.* There is a truth in this position, if Zophars supposition had been true. For the distance between mans nature, and grace, is greater then that between mans nature and a beasts: *Bare reason is further from grace then sense is from reason.* It is as easie to change
N a beast

*Vir vacuus cor-
dabitur, & pul-
lus onagri, ho-
mo evadet.*

Pagn. Jun.

*Pullus onagri
homo nascitur.
Sub eleganti
ironia Sophar
Jobum velli-
cat, vir vacuus
sapiens fiet
quando pullus
onagri homo
evadet. Bold.*

a beaſt into a man, or to make a beaſt underſtand reaſon, as to change a ſinner into a Saint, or to make a beleever of an Infidel. **Conversion is not the change of actions only, but of nature.** This ſentence, *Vain man ſhall be made wiſe, when an aſſe is made a man,* is of the ſame ſenſe with that Proverb among us, *When the ſkie falls we ſhall have larks,* or with this, *Such a thing ſhall come to paſſe when a black-more is waſhed white,* or rather with that of our Saviour in the Goſpel, *It is eaſier for a camel to goe thorow the eye of a needle, then for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God,* Mat. 19. 24. Rich men ſhall go to heaven, when a camel or a cable (ſo ſome read) paſſeth thorow a needle; that is, it is impoſſible they ſhould by any power of man; and therefore to eaſe the ſharpenſſe of the ſpeech, Chriſt adds by way of explication, *With God all things are poſſible. It is an hard thing, yea an impoſſible thing (without God) for a rich man to be ſaved,* or for a vain man to be made wiſe. And it is thus hard to make a rich man happy, becauſe he thinks himſelf happy enough, and to make a vain man wiſe, becauſe he preſumes he is wiſe enough. *Seeſt thou a man wiſe in his own conceit, there is more hope of a fool than of him,* Prov. 26. 12. or in the language of this text, there is as much hope of a beaſt as of him. A man had better be ignorant, then conceited of his knowledge. *An opinion of knowledge keeps out true knowledge.* Not only inſtruction, but correction is loſt on ſuch Opinioniſts. (Prov. 27. 22.) *Though thou ſhouldeſt bray a fool in a mortar among wheat with a peſtel, yet will not his fooliſhneſſe depart from him.* He means it not of a natural fool, nor of one that is convinced of his fooliſhneſſe, but of him (who is the great fool of all) that is in love with his own fancies and ſhadows of wiſdome: take ſuch a fool and beat him to pieces in a mortar, that is, let him be afflicted, till he be almoſt deſtroyed, yet his folly departs not from him; you may as ſoon make a beaſt a man, as ſuch a fool to underſtand, *There is but one greater enemy to recall knowledge then ignorance, and that is a conceit of knowledge.* Only he that can drive a camel thorow a needles eye, and make a beaſt a man; Only he that calls thoſe things which are not, as if they were, can make vain man wiſe, and him to be holy, who is not.

Flagellis eruditur, Equum vis excors Ex-pers omnium ſcientiarum naſcatur, tam men per Dei gratiam redditur intelligens. Variab.

Secondly, This rendering, *So ſhall vain man be made wiſe, and the wilde aſſe ſhall be born a man,* ſheweth us the effect of thoſe afflictions, which God laieth upon man. He conſiders their ſins to puniſh

punish and chasten them; What of that? So shall vain man be made wise, &c. As if he had said, The end of the chastening of God upon man, is to make him wise, or (as the Prophet speaks, *Isa. 27. 9.*) *By this shall the iniquity of man be purged, and this is all the fruit to take away his sinne, his vanity, that the wilde asses colt may be born a man, or re-born.* This interpretation gives us the very language of the new Testament, about the grace of regeneration, or a new birth, *Joh. 3. 5, 6.* In which this wonder is continually wrought, *A wilde asse is born a man.*

Hence observe,

That afflictions blessed and made effectual by God, make a gracious change in man.

How many ignorant men have with correction received instruction? How many proud men have been made humble, and of carnal spiritual? How many unruly spirits have been brought in compasse, and stubborn ones subdued with a rod? The rod and the Word work miracles, when God works with them. If God speak to a dry rod, it shall bring forth these Almond blossoms, and heavenly fruits; and unlesse he speak with the Word, we continue dry, yea dead, earthly and unfruitful. *Before I was afflicted I went astray, saith David; David wander'd like a sheep, and was as a beast; affliction made him a man, and turned him home, Ephraim crieth out, Jer. 31. 18. Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised,* importing either the strength of the affliction: when God will afflict, no man can stay his hand, or take off his blow: Or the effect of the affliction, *Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised,* that is, I was bettered by my chastisements. The Lord chasteneth some, who are not chastised; there is no change made, they do not mend with beating. This I rather pitch upon, as the meaning of Ephraims bemoaning acknowledgement, *Thou hast chastened me, and I was chastened:* and observe how he speaks of himself under the notion of a beast, *I was as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke, I could not endure to come under discipline, I could not abide the yoke, or submit unto thy will, Turn thou me, and I shall be turned, for thou art the Lord my God;* But is this the language of a beast? No, when once the Lord had chastened him, he spake like a man, whereas before he spake and did like a beast, even like a bullock unaccustomed to

the yoke, but now he hath the voice of a man, yea the voice of a Saint, *Turn thou me, and I shall be turned for thou art the Lord my God.* O happy chastenings, which make such changes! And chastisings have many advantages to make such changes, to turn beasts into men. For

1. They imbitter the world to us, the world is such a beast that it makes men beasts, and when the world is taken out of our hearts, the beast departs from us, and is taken out of our hearts.

2. Afflictions make sinne more visible, judgements realize the evil that is in sinne; and shew us the poison of that serpent.

3. Afflictions are proper to tame our wildnesse, and take down the loftinesse of our spirits. *Nebuchadnezzar* for his pride was (in a manner, in his manners he was before) turned into a beast. His outward shape was not changed (The Poets *Metamorphosis* was in morals, and so was this in the Prophet) but he lived like a beast, or he lead the life of a beast. *Some for sinne are put to live like beasts, and all men in sinne live like beasts.* *Nebuchadnezzar* living among beasts, and like a beast, learned to be a man; For at the end of the daies, saith he, *I Nebuchadnezzar lift up mine eyes to heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me* (Dan. 4. 24.) Thus *Nebuchadnezzar* was born a man, I do not say he was born an holy man, but a man he was born, *His understanding returned unto him, and his Councillours and his Lords sought unto him,* they owned him then not only as a man, but as a Monarch. Afflictions civillize most, and they spirituallize many. They are more brutish then beasts, who (as the Prophet describes them, *Isa. 51. 20.*) continue *like wilde buls full of the fury* (and empty of the spirit) of the Lord, when they are entangled in these nets, or taken with these toils.

And because there is so great a tendency in affliction to humble and purifie vain man from his sinne, therefore affliction is brought in as a great aggravation of the sinne of man. How beastly are they that will not return from their folly, when they are smitten and broken with judgements? Hence that iterated exhortation (*Amos 4.*) *I have smitten you, &c. yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the*

the Lord; God himself doth even wonder that the beast should not turn man, when he had been so long under the burden, and had received so many blows. 'Tis seasonable for us of this Nation, to consider this point, We have been like wilde asses colts, ignorant, vain, obstinate, and unteachable; God hath considered these things, he hath written his observation of them in bloody characters. O that this might be the fruit, that such as have been empty, and without hearts, might learn wisdom, that such as have been wilde asses, might be born men, yea good men. This would make all our losses gain to us, and our judgements mercies, such a change as this would change our water into wine, and all our sorrows into joy.

Thus I have done with the first part of *Zophars* speech, wherein he reproves *Job*, and argues the matter with him. He is now ready to alter his stile, and in stead of conviction prepares advices for him.

JOB Chap. II. Vers. 13, 14.

If thou prepare thine heart, and stretch out thine hands towards him.

If iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away, and let not wickednes dwell in thy tabernacles.

*Est parmesis,
qua Jobum
hortatur, ut ad
Deum redeat
amplissima illi
boni pollicens.
Merc.*

IN the former part of this Chapter, Zophar confuted the opinion of Job, and reproved him for asserting and standing so closely to it. In this he gives him counsell and direction; his counsell is contained in these two verses. Toward the receiving of which, he proposeth not a few encouragements, in the words which follow. The whole may be formed up thus.

Thou oughtest willingly to hear, and chearfully to obey that counsel in the hearing and obeying whereof, thou shalt be freed from evil, and enjoy all desirable blessings and good things.

But if thou hear and obey my counsel, if thou prepare thine heart, and stretch out thine hands towards God, if thou put the iniquity of thy hand far away from thee, thou shalt be freed from all evil, and enjoy all desirable blessings and good things.

Therefore thou oughtest willingly to hear, and chearfully to obey my counsel.

The conclusion of this syllogisme is delivered in the 13. and 14. verses. The assumption, (namely that, in preparing his heart, and praying unto God, he should be blessed) is laid down, in the 15, 16, 17, 18, and 19th verses; which is illustrated by the opposite and contrary condition of the wicked, at the 20th verse, *But the eyes of the wicked shall fail, and they shall not escape, and their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost.*

If thou prepare thine heart.

The words are an hortatory supposition, and (as was toucht before) we may observe that the three friends of Job, cast their discourses in the same mould, and insist in the same method. Their speeches are all of one frame and piece, as if they had spoken by consent, or had before-hand resolved upon a joynnt-mannaging,
of

of their arguments and proceedings. While they all hit the ſame nail, they hope at laſt to drive it home to the head. As I have ſhewed *Eliphaz* in the fifth, and *Bildad* in the eighth Chapter, ſo now I muſt ſhew *Zophar* after he had ſufficiently, if not bitterly reproved *Job*, adminiſtring holy and whoſome advice and counſel.

If thou prepare thine heart.

As if he had ſaid, Come (friend) leave off thy complaining and diſputings, leave off thy ſelf-juſtifying and overweenings of thy own worth; Be perſwaded at laſt to lay down thy weapons, and ſubmit thy ſelf, give over reaſoning and fall to praying. Prepare thy heart to ſeek God.

The Vulgar reads it, as a charge brought againſt him, and not as a counſel given to him, *Thou haſt ſtiffened thine heart againſt God, and thou haſt ſtretched out thine hands toward him: As if Job* had ſtill continued contumacious and obſtinate againſt God, after all theſe breakings. *To firm or ſtrengthen the heart, is to harden the heart, or to be inſenſible under the hand of God.* But rather take it according to our tranſlation, as a direction or counſel, *If thou prepare thine heart*, that is, if thou putteſt thine heart into order, or if thou fix thine heart, ſo the word is tranſlated (*Pſ. 57. My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed, I will ſing and give praiſe.* *An unfixed, or an unſetled heart, muſt needs be an unprepared heart. Fixedneſſe of heart is preparatory to preparation of heart. A fixed heart (and that only) is fitted to move towards, and to follow after God. It is very hard to aim right at that which is in motion, but it is harder for him that is in motion to aim right. The ſteady man hits the mark.*

Yet more diſtinctly conſider,

First, What is here meant by the heart?

Secondly, What by the preparing or fixing of the heart?

First, The heart is not here taken in its naturall capacity, for that part of the body, which *Philophers* call the *firſt living*, and the *laſt dying* in man. But by the heart (in a metaphor) we are to underſtand the ſoul, or the whole inward man: For as the heart is the principall part of the body, ſo the ſoul is the principall part of man, and the failings and wounds of the ſoul are to the whole man, like the failing or wounding of the heart in

reference to the outward man.

Again, As the heart in Scripture signifies the whole soul or inward man, so it is put distinctly for those noble faculties of the soul, 1. *The understanding*. 2. *The will*. 3. *The memory*, and for a fourth, which is a result or compound of them three, *The conscience*. The Apostle means the understanding, while he saith of the Gentiles, (*Rom. 1. 21.*) *Their foolish heart was darkened*: they had a knowledge of God in the creature, but they waxed wanton, and became vain in their imaginations, and therefore their *foolish heart*, that is, their understanding was *darkened*; God sent them a *spiritual cloud*, because they did not improve *natural light*. They who abuse light are most usually and most justly left in darknesse. But to the point, the same Apostle attributes *blindnesse of heart*, that is, of understanding, to the same Gentiles, *Ephes. 4. 18.*

2. The heart expresseth the *will*, in that answer of Christ to the Lawyers Question, *Which is the great commandment in the law?* *Mat. 22. 36.* *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God* (saith Christ, *v. 37.*) *with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind*, that is, with thy will, with thy affections, with thy understanding, and with all of each of these. And as the heart of man is his will, so also is the heart of God. *I have sought me a man* (saith God, *1 Sam. 13. 14.*) *after my own heart*. He is such a man as I would have, he is so much after my will, *That he will perform all my wils.*

3. The heart of man is his memory (*Psal. 119. 11.*) *Thy word have I hid in my heart*: Memory is the repository or store-house of the word, The treasury of holy truths, Mary *hid the words of Christ there*, *Luk. 2. 19.*

4. The conscience, which hath in it the light of the understanding, the motions of the will, and the recognitions of the memory, comes under the notion of the heart (*Psal. 51. 12.*) *Create in me a clean heart, O God*; that is, purifie my conscience, set that right; *Dauids* conscience was extreamly out of frame; his sinne had reduced it back into a kind of chaos, this made him pray for a new creation: Ordinary repairs, or a little mending would not serve his turn. But if this Scripture convince not the heart, for the conscience, yet that of the Apostle *John* doth beyond all exception. *If our heart condemn us, God is greater then our heart*, (*1 Joh. 3. 20.*) and so doth that of *Job*, (*Chap. 27. 6.*) *My heart* (that is, my conscience) *shall not reproach me so long as I live.* It

is conscience which chiderth and reproacheth the sinner, and tells him his own. It is conscience that speaks fair, and gives good words to those who walk uprightly, *My heart (saith upright Job) shall not reproach me*; that is, I have walked in my integrity, therefore I am not afraid what conscience can doe, or say against me.

When *Job* is advised to *prepare his heart*, we must enlarge it to the whole inward man, not fix upon any one of these faculties in opposition to, or exemption from the other.

If thou prepare thine heart.

This preparation consisteth in two things.

1. In removing and sweeping out the filth which is in the heart, *Dicit cor tuum, non labia tua, quod hypocritarum est, hortatur Jobum ut ad Deum redeat non fide simulate.* *Mat. 15. 19. Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.* Now, as it is the continual work of an evil heart to send out these; so it is the first work of preparing a good heart, to purge and cast out these. They come out of the heart easily, but, O how hard is it, to thrust them out! yet this must be done, or else nothing is done towards the preparation of the heart. If you were to prepare an house for the entertainment of a great Prince, What would you doe? Would not your first care be to carry out the dirt, and wash the floor; Down with the cobwebs there, (cries one) away with every unclean thing. (saith another) Thus we begin to prepare our houses for such noble entertainments. Again, when you are to prepare a plot of ground to receive seed, what doe you? Doe you not first pick out the stones, pull up and bury the weeds, and then sowe? Thus the Lord dealt with his vineyard (*Isa. 5. 2.*) *He fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and then planted it with the choicest vines.* He gathered out the stones before he planted it, he would not set vines among stones. The first work in all preparations is to get out the rubbish, and remove impediments.

2. The heart wherein Christ is to be lodged, must not be a meer *vacuum*, only swept and empty: holinesse doth not consist in negatives, in removing and throwing out of evil, though that be a great part of it: Therefore the next part of preparation is the adorning and beautifying of the heart, the quickning and heightning of it to those duties and services which God calls for. If you entertain a Prince, or but a special friend, as you sweep

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your house, and wash away the dirt, so you put up your *Arras hangings*, lay on your *Persian carpets*, set up your *Ivory beds*, uncover your *rich stools*, bring out your *Plate and ornaments*, till then the house is not prepared. Thus to the point in hand, the preparation of the heart consists in the actings of grace, in opening of all your spiritual stores, in putting on the richest furnitures of the inward man, in being cloathed with the Spirit, in shewing forth the vertues of the Lord Jesus Christ. If you be not thus beautified, as well as emptied, you are unprepared.

It is said (*Mat. 12. 44.*) *That the evil spirit* returning to his house, whence he came out, when he is come, *findeth it empty, swept and garnished*. No marvel if it were empty, for who would dwell in a house, which hath had the devil for its tenant? But how came it swept, and with what broom? How came it to be garnished, and with what furniture? Must a house be made clean to entertain an unclean spirit? Must it be swept to receive him, who hath fill'd the whole world with filth and rubbish?

This emptying, sweeping and garnishing is fit for such a guest. A heart emptied and swept of goodnesse, a heart adorned and garnished with noisome lusts (such are the ornaments and garnish there meant) is a heart prepared for the devil. In this manner, but with the most contrary materials must the heart be prepared for God. It must be emptied and swept of sinne, it must be garnished with grace, before the King of glory enters in.

In these two acts, preparation of the heart consists, and without both it is imperfect: if the room be not cleansed, he who is of purer eyes than to behold any unclean thing, will not lodge in it. God and sin cannot dwell together, *What communion is there between light and darknesse, between Christ and Belial?* Neither is it enough (if it were possible) to cast out sin, and put off the old man, unlesse you put on the new. Some attempt to put the new man upon the old. They are willing (in this sense) to be cloathed upon, but cannot endure to be uncloathed. *Holinesse upon unholinesse is the disguise, not the habit of a holy man.* Others would be uncloathed, so they might be spared this pains to be cloathed upon. It is easier with them not to do evil, then to do good. *Evil laid aside, and good not admitted or acted, makes but half (if so much of) a good man.* A due preparation of the heart consists in putting off every evil, and in not doing any;
in

in putting on all, and in doing every good.

This is the work which *Job* is adviſed unto, The ſumme of all ſafe and whoſome counſel is contracted into this one ſentence, *Prepare thy heart.*

Hence obſerve,

First, *God muſt have the heart.*

He made the heart, therefore he deſerves it. He gives us his heart, therefore he deſerves ours. Whatſoever we give him without a heart, we give him nothing. *There is only ſo much of value in what we doe, as there is of heart in it.* It is the voice of our hearts, not the muſick of our tongues that God regards, *My ſonne, give me thine heart,* God muſt have your beſt piece, for he is the beſt of all.

Secondly, *Any heart will not ſerve Gods turn; it muſt be a prepared heart.*

He accepts not the beſt ſervice without a heart: How then ſhould he accept an evil heart, which can doe him no ſervice, or none but ill? As a good heart is the beſt part of man, ſo an evil heart is the worſt, and there is no heart, but is one of theſe; That which is not good is evil, and that which is not prepared, is not good. Therefore the heart, which is a gift fit for God, muſt be a prepared heart.

Thirdly, *Our preparations for God muſt begin at the heart.*

When *Zophar* would direct *Job*, he ſaith, *If thou prepare thine heart; never think to cleanſe your hands before you cleanſe your hearts:* who can ſweeten the ſtream, while the fountain is bitter, or make the fruit good, while the tree is evil? (*Act. 15. 9.*) He put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith: Where the holy Ghoſt begins, we muſt: They who agree not in purity of heart, ſhall differ for ever. They who agree in purity of heart, though they diſagree in opinion, ſhould put no difference (I am ſure not ſuch wide ones as now are) between themſelves. The truth is, where hearts are really purified by faith, their differences in opinion cannot be very wide; for they who are ſo wide that they cannot be ſaved, were never purified: When once the heart is purified, head and hand cannot continue very long, or very much unpurified. For though purifying begins alwaies at the heart, yet it never ſtays there. Many a man hath purified his head from falſe principles. (he is very orthodox) and his hands from falſe practices (he is very honeſt)

whose heart was never purified. But there is no man, nor ever was, whose heart is purified, but his head and hands, were, are, or shall be purified, even in this present life. A man whose heart is prepared cannot persevere to the end in doing or holding evil; *But the reason of all the evil both done and held in the world, is, because the heart is not prepared.* So it is said of Rehoboam 2 Chron. 12. 14. *He did evil in the sight of the Lord, Why? Because he prepared not his heart to seek the Lord.* Possibly he made some outward preparations, but he prepared not his heart. And when Simon Magus, who made such haste to be washed in the water of baptism, (Act. 8.) did soon after appear so foul; where lay the fault? He had made such an outward profession, that the Apostle could not refuse him, his tongue was as good, and 'tis like he shewed as fair a hand as the rest did, Why then did Simon Magus fail? The Apostle tells him (and us) the reason (vers. 21.) *Thine heart is not right in the sight of God;* He had washed his out-side, but his inwards were unclean. *The heart is the worst part of man, till it be mended, and then 'tis the best.* Where most evil lieth, there we must begin to be good; All is good, when that is good which is the seat, the nest of all evil. When Christ was coming into the world, to accomplish that great work of redemption, he saith (Heb. 10. 5.) *Loe I come (in the volume of thy book it is written of me) to doe thy will, O God, a body hast thou prepared me, &c.* *Christ needed not to have a heart prepared him, his heart was prepared from all eternity, there was never any, the least unpreparednesse in his heart, for he was holy in his temporal conception; and he was the holy Son of God, by an eternal generation; and therefore he doth not say, An heart hast thou prepared me, no, he might say (in the highest sense with the Psalmist) My heart is ready, O God, my heart is ready.* What needed he then to fit him for a sacrifice? Only a body capable of sufferings. He had a heart fit both to do and suffer, but he wanted a body: *He was in the form of God, therefore a body, a suite of flesh and blood, such as the Divine Nature never wore before, must be provided for him, and provided it was: God himself was at the whole cost to make it (man contributed nothing) A body hast thou prepared me, O God.* But when man is called to do the will of God, he hath a body prepared, but he wants an heart. He hath but need to pray, *Lord prepare an heart for me; if the heart be prepared, the body is. All the distempers and unserviceable-*

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ness of our bodies arise from the unpreparedness of our hearts. The heart carries the whole man with it, if once that be ready, all is ready.

Fourthly, Observe, *God will not doe us good, until we are fit to receive good.*

Grace is free, yet grace prepares us for grace. As the meer favour of God bestows the first grace upon us, so the exercise of grace fits us for further favour. *If thou prepare thine heart, then, &c.* In all the publike reformatations recorded in Scripture, God calls his people to set their hearts right (1 Sam. 7. 3.) *Put away the strange gods and Ashtaroth from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the Lord.* The want of this is complained of, as the cause of all their wants. Hence the Prophet prayeth (Psal. 78. 8.) that they might not be as their fathers, *A stubborn and rebellious generation, A generation that set not their hearts aright.* While our hearts are not right with God, no marvel if things go wrong with us. All the unevenness of our lives, whether in what we do, or in what we enjoy, ariseth from the unevenness of our hearts. How can they expect to receive good, who are totally unfit to do good? *The lips of the wise disperse knowledge, but the heart of the foolish (doth) not so; or (nearer the original) is not right,* Prov. 15. 7. This later translation expounds the former, for the reason, why he cannot do so, is, because his heart is not right, *The lips of the wise disperse knowledge,* they scatter or sow the good seed of knowledge: but the heart of a fool is not right, therefore he cannot do so, & because his heart is so unprepared to do good, he receives no good. This was the stop, or gave check to that good work of reformation 2 Chr. 20. 33 much was done, *Howbeit the high-places were not taken away,* why what hindered? *The people had not as yet prepared their hearts unto the God of their fathers,* they were not ready for God. And that may be the very reason, why at this time we go on so slowly in duty, and why our mercies come on so slowly; we are not yet prepared for the God of our fathers; our pride, our envyings, our worldlines, and creature interests, are so great, & stick so close to us, that we are unfit for the work God calls for at our hands, and for the mercy which we are waiting for at the hand of God.

Fifthly, How is it that Zophar saith, *If thou prepare thine heart?* he puts the work upon Job. *Who is able to prepare his own heart?* We may as well create a world, as convert our selves. We may as soon be our own Saviours, as our own preparers.

It is indeed Gods work to prepare the heart, yet Zophar gives good counsel to Job, when he saith, *If thou prepare thine heart.* The Pelagians of old, with their successours in that perswasion, Papists and Arminians, mis-interpret texts of like importance with this, to prove that the conversion of man to God begins at man; or that the grace of God is subsequent, or but a secondary to the self-preparations of man. Whereas such Scriptures shew us our duty, not our ability, what must be done, not what we can do. A naturall man hath no strength, a godly man cannot improve his strength without assistance. *Without me* (saith Christ) *ye* (my Disciples) *can do nothing*, Joh. 15. 5. Our preparations of heart doe not at all begin at us, nor are they compleated by us.

Hence observe,

We may be called to doe what is not in our power to doe.

The Apostle exhorts, *Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling* (Phil. 2. 12.) He seems to give a strange reason in the next verse, *For it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure* (v. 13.) our inability to work doth not exempt us from working, we having a promise from God to make us able: we are commanded to doe what we have not so much as a will to doe, because God is engaged to work in us both to will and to doe, and that, not according to any predispositions of ours, but of his own good pleasure. Our master in heaven shews us our duty, and then helps us to perform it. He calls us to prepare our hearts, and then prepares them for us. For they who have received grace, have not a full power to obey this call, and they who are in nature have none at all, yet it is not in vain to say to a man of the one state, nor of the other, *Prepare thine heart.* Though the later be dead in sins and trespasses, yet it is neither improper, nor unprofitable to bid him turn from sin, because while we speak to the ear, God saith he will speak to the heart, and accompany the Word with his own power, yea *make the word of man the power of God unto mans salvation.* And though the former cannot fully obey this call, nor prepare his heart without new actual concurrences, and fresh receipts of grace, yet by such invitations God awakens and stirs up those old habits of grace, which lay slumbering, or unacted, and causeth such to stir up themselves, who were asleep, or very unactive. The Prophet complained *Isa. 64. v. 7. That no man stirred up himself to take hold of God.* As man must

must stirre up himself, yet he stirs not, till God stirre him, so man must prepare his heart, yet he cannot prepare it, till God prepareth him, *Psal. 10. 17. Lord, thou wilt prepare their heart, thou wilt cause thine ear to hear.* It is not only the priviledge, but the purpose of God to prepare our hearts, yet if we desire he should, we must set our selves to prepare our own hearts. David in that gratulatory prayer for the free oblations and contributions of the people toward the building of the Temple, thus bespeaketh God, *Keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of thy people, and prepare their heart unto thee, 1 Chron. 29. 16.* He blesseth God for the present preparation, he begs of God to continue their prepared hearts in a gracious frame, and yet as if nothing had been done, he prayeth for further preparation. *Pro. 16. v. 1. The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue is from the Lord.* You see all is from the Lord, the root and the fruit, heart-work and tongue-work, our thoughts which are the moulds of action, and our words which are the image of our thoughts; God works at the bottome of the heart, and at the tip of the tongue, yet man must not sit still; that God works must not make us idle: when we hear that God doth all, we must not take up resolutions to do nothing, no, the Lord in speaking thus, at once directs us what to do, and assists us to do it. Grace is as much magnified in working in us, as in saving us without works; that's the reason why we are so often called to duty, though we have no power. If thou prepare thine heart.

And stretch out thine hands towards him.

Or Spread thy palms to him, so the letter of the original.

וּפְרַשְׁתָּ אֵלָיו
כַּפֶּיךָ

The word which we translate, *Stretch out*, signifies sometimes an affected ostentation, or the spreading of a thing to have it seen. Hence one of the Ancients expounds this place as a reproof upon Job, giving the meaning of it thus, *Thou hast stretched forth thine hands towards him, that is, Thou hast vaunted of thy works of piety, justice and charity, thou hast spread thy palms, yea thy plumes before God, and shewed him what work thou hast done him.* Some tell us that the word *Pharisee*, is derived from this (*Parash*) to lay open, to unfold and stretch out: and there is a double reason given of it: First, because the *Pharisees* wore the law openly, with broad enlarged phylacteries: Or secondly, because they loved to do all their duties openly, they would pray in the open streets.

Expandere manus est opera pietatis ostentare & vaniloquentia dilatata. Greg.

streets, they gave alms with sound of trumpet, and Christ tells them to their teeth, *That all they did was to be seen of men*; they kept their evil hearts close, and durst not let them be seen, but for their good works they cared not who saw them, or rather their care was that all should see them; thus they spread out their hands. Christ adviseth in the matter of alms, to keep the hand close, *Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doth* (Mat. 6. v. 31.) The right hand is the working and giving hand, our good works, especially our gifts should be done in such secrecy, that the left hand which is so near a neighbour, must not know what is done by the right. But the Pharisees made not only their *left hand*, that is their next neighbours, but town and countrey know what their *right hands* had done. *He that desires all should be known, which his right hand doth, doth nothing at all with a right heart. It is dangerous to hide the talents which God lends us, but it is as much our duty to hide the talents* (such are gifts to the poor) *which we lend to God, as it is to lend them.* These talents are best traded, when wrapt in a napkin, or buried in the earth.

Some conceive Zophar in these words taxing Job with vain ostentation of his good deeds, *Thou hast stretched out thine hands*, that is, Thou hast told God stories of thy charity, of thine alms, &c.

Manuum expansio pertinet ad habitum frontis. Phil.

Others interpret thus, *Thou hast stretched, &c.* that is, thou hast carried thy self insultingly, furiously, madly toward God; stretching forth of the hands, is a posture of fury; An uncomposed minde is often visible in the uncomposednesse of an outward member.

But thirdly, waving those two, *stretching forth of the hands*, as it is here given in counsell, hath a three-fold use in Scripture.

1. It is a gesture of sorrow, mourners stretch out their hands (Jer. 4. 31.) *I have heard a voice as of a woman in travel, and the anguish, as of her that bringeth forth her first childe. The voice of the daughter of Zion that bewaileth her self, that spreadeth her hands, saying, Woe is me now, for my soul is wearied, because of the murderers.*

2. It is a gesture of bounty or pity; Stretching out the hands, implieth a readinesse and willingnesse to receive to favour, or to shew favour (Isa. 65. 2.) *I (saith the Lord) have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people, that is, I have expressed my*

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my willingnesse to receive and entertain them, to pardon them, and do them good. Open hands are the emblem of an open heart, and arms stretched out, of a readinesse to imbrace. When we stretch out our hands to God, it speaks our willingnesse to receive his commands, and when God stretcheth out his hands to us, it speaks his readinesse to pardon our sins, and supply our wants.

3. Stretching out the hands is a prayer gesture. As he that helps stretcheth forth his hand, so doth he that would be holpen. When Moses went out from the presence of Pharaoh, he saith, *As soon as I am gone out of the city, I will spread abroad my hands unto the Lord, and the thunder shall cease, &c.* Exod. 9. 29. That is, I will pray unto the Lord, that the thunder may cease, and I am assured it shall. So 1 King 8. 22. at the dedication of the Temple, Solomon stood before the altar, and spread forth his hands towards heaven. Let us lift up our heart with (our) hands unto God in the heavens (Lam. 3. 41.) or according to the letter of the Hebrew, Let us lift up our hearts to our hands, to God in the heavens; that is, let our hearts be lifted up, as well as our hands. Some lift up their hands while their hearts hang down in prayer. The Apostles charge 1 Tim. 2. 8. clears it further, *I will that men pray every where lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting.* Heathens have observed and described this posture of suppliants to their Idol-gods, bowing their knees, holding up their hands and praying.

*Est habitus
opem imploran-
tis & orationis
signum. Merc.*

*Nixæ genibus
supinas manus
ad deos tenden-
tes orantesque,
&c. Liv. l. 39.
Ac supplex ge-
minas tendens
ad sidera pal-
mas. Syl. Ital.*

So that putting both together, *Prepare thine heart, and stretch out thine hands towards him*, are plainly this, *Prepare thine heart and pray, or prepare thine heart to pray.* The sign is put for the thing signified, or the gesture used in that duty for the duty it self in which it is used. There are four significations which stretching forth the hands may have in prayer. I will touch upon that (only to shew the vanity of it) which the *superstitious Papists* do much insist upon; we pray (say they) stretching forth the hands or arms, to expresse the *croffe of Christ*, because when a man stretcheth out his arms, his body makes the figure of a croffe. This they make one reason why stretching out the hands is appointed or accustomed in prayer. But how they who lived where such a kinde of death as crucifying was never heard of, as *Zophar* and *Job* did; and so many hundred years before Christ died upon the croffe, how they (I say) could in prayer form their bodies intentionally, to that which was never formed in their minds, the

croſſe of Chriſt is beyond all conjecture, and is no point at all of faith. To paſſe that, there are (I ſay) four ſignificancies in it.

1. Stretching out the hands towards God in praier, implieth a reſignation of our ſelves to the will and work of God. It is as much as to ſay, *Theſe hands of mine, which I have heretofore imployed about the work of the devil, and the ſervice of ſinne, now, Lord, I dedicate them and their work wholly to thy ſelf.* They who give their hearts to God, will not ſtick at giving their hands. Holy prayer offers up the whole man to God, and deſires him to take the ſpoils of all. A godly man hath not a finger at his own diſpoſe. The hand being the great organ or inſtrument of action, the ſtretching out of our hands to God, may well imply our readineſſe to act wholly at his direction. *The ſureſt way to write our ſelves ſervants to God, is to give him our hands.*

2. *Stretching forth of the hands, ſignifieth a holy ſtriving with God in prayer, or the earneſtneſſe and ſtrong intention of our ſpirits in prayer.* A man that ſtriveth with another, ſtretcheth out his hands, and takes hold of him. So did Jacob when he wreſtled with the Angel, he held him faſt, and would not let him go, till he had prevailed for a bleſſing.

Oratio eſt elevatione mentis ad deum.

Qua autem ſegnitia eſt alienari & capi ineptis cogitationibus cum deum deprecaris, quaſi ſit aliud quod magis debes cogitare quam quod cum deo loquaris? quomodo te a deo audiri poſſit utas cum te ipſe non audias? vis eſſe deum memorem tui cum rogas; cum tu ipſe memor tui non ſis.

Cyprian. Ser. de Orat. Dominica.

3. Stretching out of the hand imports the lifting up of the minde to God in prayer. *Prayer is the aſcent of the ſoul to God.* We pray no more then we have communion with God in prayer. *Unto thee, O Lord (ſaith David, Pſal. 25. 1.) doe I lift up my ſoul.* We ſhould not leave any thing of our ſouls, no nor of our ſelves here on earth, when we pray to *our Father which is in heaven.* We ſhould then lock our hearts againſt worldly thoughts, and ſet them open to God only. Satan is very buſie to buſie the heart with temptations, while the tongue is uttering petitions. Let hands lifted up be witneſſes that the ſoul is; that it is in the mount, out of the noiſe and clatter of this world. How can we beleeve that God heareth us, when we doe not hear our ſelves? or that he ſhould be mindful to grant what we aſk, when we doe not minde what we are aſking?

4. Stretching out of the hands ſaith, that all our hope and expectation is in God. We ſtretch out our hands to him to tell him that we depend wholly upon him for help, mercy, favour and pardon, that unleſſe he deliver us, we are loſt and undone for ever. When a childe is in danger of falling, he ſtretcheth out his

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his hands to his mother, or to any next him, crying for their help. If a man be fallen into the mire, or water, he stretcheth out his hands presently; though himself cannot speak, yet his hands lifted up speak for hands to lift him up. The prisoner in war casts down his weapons, and lifts up his hands to the victor for pitty and quarter. Thus hands lifted up or stretched out in prayer, begge mercy, and shew our dependance upon God for succour. The lifting up of our eyes to God, is of the same signification: *Unto thee lift I up mine eyes, O thou that dwellest in the heavens, as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden to the hand of her mistresse, so our eyes waite upon the Lord our God till he have mercy upon us,* Psal. 123. 1, 2. In this posture Christ prayed to his father, *Joh. 17. 1. These words spake Jesus, and lift up his eyes to heaven and said, Father the hour is come, glorifie thy Son.* He lifted up his eyes as a sign of confidence in, and holy boldnesse with his father. This signe is also given, with a hand stretched out in prayer, as *Zophar* gives in counsel;

If thou stretch forth thine hands towards him.

First, Observe,

That as the heart must be prepared for all good duties, so especially for prayer. If thou prepare thine heart, and stretch out thine hands towards him.

Prayer is a duty of greatest weight, a most spiritual duty, it is our access to God in Christ, it is our entring into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, Heb. 10. 19. and if ever we had need to look to the holiness of our hearts, it is when we draw neer unto the holy God, who is looking into our hearts. In prayer we desire God to look into our hearts, and shall not we look into them our selves?

Secondly, Observe,

Prayer is a special duty of repentance. And the confession of our unpreparednesse, is a special part of prayer.

Zophar thought *Job* had need enough to repent, and he that repents hath need enough to pray: repentance is our returning to God; prayer is our drawing neer to God. *I will arise (saith the prodigal sonne) and go to my father, and I will say unto him, father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy sonne.*

Thirdly, *If thou prepare thine heart, and stretch out thine hands towards him;*

Hence Observe ;

In prayer the whole man must be exercised. Heart and hand must joyn in this duty. Not only the soul but the body must pray ; hands must pray, knees must pray, and eyes must pray ; *Gestures are speaking in prayer*, By these we pray when we hold our peace, and lift up a loud voice when we say never a word ; *kneeling or prostrating the body speaks humility, beating the breast, smiting upon the thigh, are significative of sorrow, lifting up the eyes and hands to heaven*, argue a fervent and attentive spirit. But as it is

Hi gestus facile degenerant. Optimæ preces quæ minimum strepunt & in abscondito cordis ad eum effunduntur qui videt in occulto & rependit in aperto, qui non tam vocis quam cordis auditor est.

compleatest duty to pray with hand and heart ; so it is emptiest hypocrisie, to pray with the hand and not with the heart. These gestures (take that caution) may soon degenerate ; The body may be very active when the soul sits still or is escaped from the work. Some use much action, who use no affection in prayer ; Soul-prayer though alone is good, but woe to body-prayer when it is alone ; how can it get warmth or heat when it is alone? Soul-prayer is absolutely necessary, body-prayer is comely. Internal prayer pleaseth God most, external prayer honours God most. What God hath joyned together, let not us (while we may keep them together) part asunder.

And as the whole man should be employed in prayer, so especially in that *signal conclusion* of it, *Amen*. Some of the ancient Hebrews teach us to gather up all our spirits into the *Amen* of prayer, because prayer is (as it were) *gathered all together*, or summ'd up into *Amen*. The spirits of the whole prayer are contracted into it, and so should the spirit of him that prayeth. *Amen* is a short word, but it is in sence as long as the longest prayer. Most say *Amen*, because they use to say so, not because they know what they say. *Amen* is often at the tongues end, but 'tis seldome at the hearts end. Formality and flatnesse of the spirit, paul's and unspirits it in the speaking. There are 3. things which the Rab- bins have observed upon the saying of *Amen*.

First, Your *Amen* (say they) must not be hasty. Secondly, It must not be maimed or defective. Thirdly, It must not be alone.

Ne sit responsio r̃s Amens ramptamanc orba, in Notis ad Pirke Avorh.

First, It must not be *hasty*, without a settled consideration of what we have prayed for. We must say *Amen* with our understandings. That's the Apostles argument for prayer in a known language : *else when thou shalt blesse with the Spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest?* 1 Cor. 14. 16.

Secondly,

Secondly, *Amen* must not be *maimed*, that is, without the prosecution and instance of our spirits, we must stretch out our hearts after it, and be swallowed up in God.

Thirdly, *Amen* must not be *alone or an orphan*, that is, without faith, love, and holy confidence: for when we say *Amen*, we say *Let it be done*, and shall we say to God, *Doe all*, and have no faith that any thing shall be done? Let not *Amen* stand alone as a poor orphan, which hath neither father nor mother, *faith nor love* to support and carry it on to the object of prayer, to the God hearing prayer.

Some interpreters give it, as *Zophars* special aim, to remember *Job* that his prayers had been faithlesse and flat; that the spirits of his petition were exhal'd and gone. For whereas *Eliphaz* and *Bildad* had exhorted him to humility and patience, *Job* answers, he had prayed for both, as also that God would either end his pains or him, remove his sorrows, or shew him the reason why they were continued. *Zophar* stepps in upon this advantage: *Thou hast been praying indeed (saith he) but thy heart hath not been right, nor thy spirit fervent, thou hast not prayed with a prepared heart, nor with a stretcht out hand unto God; thou hast prayed rather out of the bitterness, than out of the holiness of thy spirit; Thy suites are the fruit of presumption, not of faith, of unwarrantable boldnesse with God, not of an holy confidence in him; now I would have thee pray indeed. Prepare thine heart and stretch out thine hands, pray with all thy might, and then hearken what the Lord God will say.*

This check (as some conceive) caused *Job* in his answer to *Zophar*, to complain, *I am as one mocked of his neighbour, who calleth upon God, and he answereth him: (chap. 12.) as if he had said, Zophar you have mocked and upbraided me with my prayers, you thought I did not prepare mine heart nor stretch out my hands to God in prayer: you speak to me as if you had felt me in a cold sweat at duty, or had seen the image of pale death sitting upon all my addresses unto God. But I am sure I feel you too hot at reproofs, and see the image of an unfriendly jealousie, sitting upon this your addresse to me. You doe but mock me while you say unto me, prepare thine heart and stretch out thine hand to God. Yet (in my thoughts) this counsel of Zophar is so holy and grave, that I see not how a gracious heart (such *Jobs* was) could interpret it as a mock, especially considered in its connexion with the next verse.*

Verſe 14. *If iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away, and let not wickedneſſe dwell in thy Tabernacle.*

He had exhorted him before, to prepare his heart and ſtretch out his hand; now he bids him prepare his hand before he ſtretch it out.

If iniquity be in thine hand.

The word Iniquity bears any ſin; yet the Chaldees ſpecificates it into a lye; *if a lye be in thine hand.* Others (which amounts to a lye) *if deceit, wrong dealing, oppreſſion or any violence be in thine hand, put it far away from thee:* any thing that deceives is a lye. *Iſa. 44. 20. He feedeth of aſhes (that is, ſorrow is his food) a deceived heart hath turned him aſide, that he cannot deliver his ſoul nor ſay, Is there not a lye in my right hand?* As if he had ſaid, His Idol promiſed him better fare then aſhes, yet he is ſo much deceived, that he cannot ſee he is, or ſay there is a lye in his right hand. Oppreſſion is properly and uſually called the ſin of the hand. There are many ſins of the body, which yet are not ſins of the hand, all thoſe are, wherein the hand acts moſt, as in violence and wrong; in theſe ſins there is ſo heavy a hand, that they deſerve to be called *ſins of the hand.* And though the word may take in any kinde of ſin, yet Zophar charges Job chiefly with that, as his other friends had done, more then once, before. That proclamation to repent, which the King of Nineveh cauſed to be publiſhed through the City ran in this tenor, *Let every one turn from the violence that is in their hands;* and if you would know what that was, reade the ſecond of Nahum there we are ſhewed, that Nineveh was a ſpoiling city, and the men thereof as lions, tearing in pieces enough for their whelps, and ſtrangling for their lionneſſes, they filled their holes with prey, and their dens with ravin; they cared not whom they ruined, ſo they might raiſe up their own eſtates. This is iniquity of the hand.

And ſecondly, We may underſtand it not only of outward and violent, but of any cloſe and ſecret wrong; carry it as covertly as you can, even like Juglers, who do that before your face which you cannot ſee, yet wrong dealing and wrong doing is iniquity, and the iniquity of the hand. *Evil done by ſleight of hand, or cunningly, is as bad as that which is done by ſtrength of hand or violently.*

Thirdly,

Si mendacium fit in manu tua. Targ. Intelligit rapinam aliorum bonorum facultates male partas. Si qua defraudatio in manu tua. Bez.

Thirdly, *If there be iniquity in thine hand*, is as if he had ſaid, *if thou haſt gotten any thing wrongfully, which ſtill remains in thy power, put it away, &c.* To be in the hand, is to be in our diſpoſe; and we ſay commonly, *ſuch a thing is out of my hand*, when we have parted with it, or diſpoſed of it. So, *if iniquity be in thine hand*, is, if thou haſt deceived any man, and the matter be ſtill with thee, reſtore it, ſend it home to the right owner, away with it, *put it far from thee.*

Before I come to the other branch, take one obſervation from this, as it hath reference to the former counſel, *Prepare thine heart, and ſtretch out thine hands towards God, if iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away from thee.* The hand muſt be cleanſed as well as the heart. For as God cannot bear it, that we ſhould come with clean hands, a fair outward converſation, when our hearts are filthy; (ſuch Chriſt diſcovered the Pharifees, who were like platters waſhed on the out ſide, but unclean within; or like ſepulchers fairly painted, but full of dead mens bones and rottenneſſe,) ſo neither can he bear it, that they whoſe hands (even to the eye of the world) are filthy and unclean, ſhould yet pretend, *they have as good hearts as others, they mean well*; as the one is groſſe hypocrifie, ſo the other is groſſe profaneneſſe. Never brag of your good meanings, or that you have good hearts, when your hands are foul. I grant many have clean hands, while they have polluted hearts, but where I ſee polluted hands, I have great reaſon to think there is a polluted heart too, *many appear better, but ſcarce any worſe than they are.* The heart may keep in its filthineſſe while the hands are waſhed, but if the heart be waſhed, the hand will not keep its filthineſſe. It is very poſſible for a man that hath a clean heart to foul his fingers, but he will not wear them foul. He reneweth faith and repentance, he waſheth off the filth in that fountain which is always open for ſin and for uncleanneſſe. They whoſe conſtant way is evil, and yet ſay they have good hearts, deceive themſelves, but cannot deceive others. Their impiety is too plain to deceive the plainest ſoul in grace, that hears them ſay ſo. *The preparation of the heart will be ſeen at the fingers ends: purity of ſpirit cannot conſiſt with impurity of life: if thou haſt iniquity in thine hand, put it far away from thee.*

Put it far away from thee.

The Original is one word, but it is a ſtrong one; thruſt it away, remove it to the utmoſt diſtance.

רחיקה

Elonga eam.

Hence

Hence learn: First,

That, sin must be put away. There is no inmate or neighbour so bad as sinne, if it dwell nigh you it will undoe you: it were better a Lyon and a Bear dwelt with you, or that you dwelt among scorpions, then that you and sin should dwell together. Sin is a bad commodity, you will never gain by it, you will certainly break if it lye upon your hand, put it off at any rate, or rather whatever it cost you, put it off. *If iniquity be in thine hand, put it away.* And not only so, But

Secondly, *Put it far away from thee.*

We can never put sin too far from us. The Apostles rule is, *Abstain from all appearance of evil*, that is, *doe nothing wherein sin appears, or which hath a shadow of sin*, 1 *Thef. 5. 22.* There is no holinesse in having a shew of goodnesse; but the very shews of sin are evil. What the Apostle adviseth for the avoiding of sin, that it may not be committed, is as good advise for the putting away of sin when it is committed; For as we are to go farre from sin by a holy care lest we fall into it; so we must go farre from sin by holy repentance after we have fallen into it. We should put it so far from us, that there may be no returning. We should put it as far from us, as the East is from the West, which is the greatest distance, not only mensurable, but imaginable. When God pardons sin he puts it thus far from us, (*Psal. 103. 12.*) and so should we (if it were possible) when we repent of it. The Original word in the Psalme is that of the text, and may be rendred thus, *God hath put our sins as farre away from us, as he hath put the East from the West.* As the grace of God towards us will not suffer sin in the guilt of it to abide near us, so the grace of God in us, will not suffer sin in the pollution of it, to abide near us. Besides, sin is such both in the nature and effects of it, as no wise man can desire near him. Who would not poyson far from him? Who would not thrust the plague or the leprosie far away from him? Who desires the neighbourhood of a mortal enemy? Sin is all this and more to us, therefore put it far away.

Thirdly, *Zophar* having invited *Job* to pray, counsels him to put iniquity far away.

Note from it,

We cannot draw near to God in prayer, except we put sinne far from us.

If sin be not put far from us, God will remove far from us: The holy God will not come near (unlesse to punish) the prayers of an unholy heart. You may stretch out your hands to heaven, but you cannot reach heaven, if any iniquity be in your hands.

Fourthly, Taking iniquity (as it hath been opened) for the violation of commutative justice, for wrong dealing and oppression; Then observe,

That which is ill gotten must be restored.

Put it out of thy house, out of thy family, it will be a fire to burn, a moth to consume, a canker to fret all thy comforts; *that diu in manu, which is ill got, will poison that which is well got.* Moses bespeaks the Israelites concerning Corah, Dathan and Abiram. *Depart I pray you from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest you be consumed in all their sins:* it is dangerous to be a neighbour to wicked men, the rayle of the storm sent upon them may fall upon our selves: it is more dangerous to keep wickedness in our own hands, the whole storm will then fall upon us: It is very sinfull to get by wrong, but it is more sinfull to keep what is wrongfully gotten; yet how hardly are men perswaded to part with it! It is casier to doe an act of charity then of justice; Many are willing to give: but few are willing to restore; yet we are more bound to be just then to be charitable, and to restore then to give; and indeed no man can give till he hath restored, nor be charitable till he is just. That which is stolen is not fit for a gift either to God or man. *God hates robbery both for almes and for burnt-offerings.* They who are unable may be innocent though they restore not, but no man can be innocent who is unwilling to restore. Some have done iniquity with their hands, who have not iniquity in their hands. What they have taken from others, is taken from them, or spent by them. These must shew, they have it in their hearts to restore all, though they have nothing in their hands to restore. How can we expect, that God should remit our just debts, if we will not restore our unjust gains?

Let not wickednesse dwell in thy tabernacles.

As the former clause respected the reforming of his person, so this the reforming of his family.

Let not wickednesse dwell.] That is, let it not continue there.

Q

But

Habitat iniquitas in domo, quando in ea diu manet.
Druſ.

But is it well if wickedneſſe dwell not with us? may it ſtay a while with us? No, not a moment. As the Apoſtle Paul ſpeaks in reference unto thoſe false brethren, who came in privily to ſpie out their liberty in Chriſt, and bring them into bondage, unto whom we gave place by ſubjection, no not for an hour, Gal. 2. 3. **So we muſt not give place to wickedneſſe for an hour**; it is not enough to ſay of wickedneſſe, it ſhall not dwell with us, it ſhall not abide with us for ever; we will have it but for a week or a night, it may be but for an hour: no, it muſt not ſtay with us an hour, no not one moment, with our good leave and liking. When Zophar ſaith, *Let not iniquity dwell in thy tabernacle*, he means, haſten it away; and the reaſon why he ſaith, *let it not dwell*, is, becauſe no man can ſo watch his houſe and family, no nor his own heart, but ſin will ſometimes come in, he ſhall finde ſuch ſtrangers there as he never invited, ſuch as he never looked for, he ſhall finde them not only knocking at the door, but boldly drawing the latch, unlocking the door and thruſting in; man cannot prevent this, either in regard of his heart or his houſe; but he may ſay, wickedneſſe ſhall not dwell with me; as ſoon as he diſcovers it he may remove it, or chide it out of doors. Though we cannot keep evil out, yet we may thruſt it out, though we cannot hinder its coming in, yet we may hinder its ſtaying in; we need not make a bed, or provide a chamber for ſin: this requires ſome pauſe and conſideration. We examine men (if we know them not) whence they are and whether they will, before we bid them welcome, or admit them to reſt under our roof. The Prophet rebukes the people of Iſrael (Jer. 4. 12.) *How long ſhall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?* vain thoughts will offer themſelves, but why do you accept and entertain them, why do you ſpeak them fair? *Let not wickedneſſe dwell in thy tabernacle.*

*Tabernaculo-
rum nomine
puto loca ſacra
intelligi, quibus
tanquam ſa-
cerdos præerat
cum eſſet in
proſperis, ubi
ubi munera
iniqua accep-
taſſe putavit
Zophar. Bold.*

In thy tabernacle.] Some underſtand it perſonally: The body of a man is his tabernacle, when the earthly houſe of this tabernacle (ſaith the Apoſtle) ſhall be deſſolved, (2 Cor. 5. 1.) So let not wickedneſſe dwell in thy tabernacle, is, let it not dwell with thee, or in thy heart.

But ſecondly, Tabernacles were of two ſorts, eccleſiaſticall, or civil, either the place of Gods worſhip, or of mans reſidence. Some expound this text in the former notion: *Let not wickedneſſe dwell in thy tabernacle*, that is, take care to purge the worſhip of God from all idolatry and ſuperſtition: There was a publike worſhip

in

in that age, as we may collect from the discourse of *Jobs* friends; Here *Zophar* (according to this sence) presseth *Job* to a reformation of worship (he being a publike person and the Priest) or accuseth him, as having suffered abuses to creep into it: at which *Eliphaz* seems to aim in his rejoinder Chap. 15. 34. *For the congregation of hypocrites shall be desolate, and fire shall consume the tabernacles of bribery.*

But I rather take tabernacle, for a civil dwelling, so, *Let not wickednesse dwell in thy tabernacle*, is (by a Trope) as if he had said, let not wickednesse dwell in those who dwell in thy tabernacle: A tabernacle is not a subject capable of good or evil, but as persons abiding there are good or evil.

Hence observe: First,

He that hath cleansed himself, should labour to cleanse others also.

At it should not satisfie us to be happy alone, so not to be holy alone. Grace is communicative and catching as well as sin: A man that hath no wickednesse dwelling in himself, would not have any man a dwelling for wickednesse: having purified his own heart and hands, he labours as far as his line reacheth, to purifie those about him. Christ gives this charge to *Peter*, *When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.*

Secondly, In relation to our own tabernacles, Observe,

The governour of a family is to look to his family, to all under his charge, that wickednesse dwell not among them.

It was the commendation of *Abraham*, and that which moved God to entrust him with his secrets, *I know Abraham that he will command his household, and his children after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord:* and if *Abraham* would teach his household the way and will of God, doubtlesse *Abraham* would not let that dwell in his household, which was contrary to the way and will of God. When *Jacob* went to *Bethel*, with sacrifice, he said unto his household and to all that were with him, *Put away the strange Gods that are among you, and be clean.* Gen. 39. Such was the resolution of *Joshua*, *I and mine house will serve the Lord:* And *David* who had the care of a whole kingdom upon him, yet takes care that no wickednesse should dwell in his Court and Royall family, Psal. 101. 7. *He that worketh deceit shall not dwell in my house, he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight.* The sins that dwell in our families, become ours, if we labour not to purge them out. A man

is guilty of so much sin as he might prevent by such means as God hath afforded him, if it doth it not. We have not satisfied our duties when we look to our selves only, but to all under our shadow or within our sphere. Further, Family sins bring family judgements, as well as nationall sins bring nationall, or personall sins personall judgements. Because *Eli* suffered his sons in sin, and did not restrain them, therefore he suffered for their sins; their sins were charged upon his account, and he paid dearly for them. When we make other mens sins our own, they will make us smart as much as our own: *And the sins of those who are ours, may quickly be ours. Where the relation is neerer, the contagion is quicker.* They are so, not only when we command and give them counsel to sin, or take pleasure in their sin, but when we do not reprove them for sin, or not improve all due means to prevent or remove their sin.

*Nota hic tria
ad veram resi-
piscenciam ne-
cessaria, primo
cordis prepara-
tionem secundo
orationem ter-
tio iniquitatis
propulsionem.
Merc.*

Lastly, These two verses, present us with a platform of repentance in three speciall acts or requisites. First, *Preparation of the heart*: Secondly, *Fervent prayer*: Thirdly, *The putting away, casting out, or banishing of iniquity*: **Till the heart be prepared we cannot pray, untill iniquity be purged out, prayer is not accepted,** unlesse all three be done we have not repented, or our repentance must be repented of. Except we repent thus we cannot be saved, and only that repentance is not to be repented of, which is unto salvation.

JOB Chap. 11. vers. 15, 16.

For then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot; yea, thou shalt be stedfast, and shalt not fear. Because thou shalt forget thy misery, and remember it as waters that passe away,

IN the former context, Zophar gives Job good counsel; in this he gives him encouragements to follow that counsel. His encouragements are laid down more generally in these two verses; and they are drawn into particulars in the words following to the end of the chapter. There are three branches of this general promise in the 15. verse.

First, *Thou shalt lift up thy face without spot.*

Secondly, *Thou shalt be stedfast.*

Thirdly, *Thou shalt not fear.*

In the { First } he promiseth him { an Honourable } estate.
 { Second } { a Setled }
 { Third } { a Comfortable }

Verse 15. *Thou shalt lift up thy face without spot.*

We had an expression neer this at the 15. verse of the 10. Chapter, where Job seems to speak (as some expound) despairingly, *If I be righteous, yet will I not lift up my head*: or, as others, humbly, *I will not lift up my head though I were righteous*. Zophar answers him here: *Thou saist, if thou wert righteous thou wouldst not lift up thy head*, but, I tell thee, if thou wert righteous (according to the counsel given thee) thou mightest lift up both thy head and heart, thou mightest take both courage and comfort, *Then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot.*

What the lifting up of the head, or of the face imports, may be seen (*chap 10. 15.*) I shall here only adde a threefold signification about lifting up the face; both phrases being of neer affinity.

1. To lift up the face is a signe of chearfullnesse, *Job 22. 26.* *For then shalt thou have thy delight in the Almighty, and shalt lift up thy face unto God; that is, thou shalt lift up thy face unto God with delight.* Joy is the light and life of the face, no marvel

then, if we lift up our faces when God cauſeth us to reioice. *A merry heart, ſaith Solomon (Prov. 17. 22.) doth good like a medicine,* and where that medicine works kindly, it ſets a man upon his legs, and makes him hold up his head like a man. God hath given man an erect countenance in the fabrick of nature, but his countenance is then moſt erect, when grace cauſeth him to reioice in God.

2, *To lift up the face,* is an act of reverence and reſpect. (*Deut. 28. 50.*) *The Lord ſhall bring a nation againſt thee of a fierce countenance, which ſhall not regard the perſon of the old,* ſo we tranſlate; the Hebrew is, *which ſhall not lift up his face to the old,* that is, which ſhall give no reverence to old men; the Septuagint render it thus, *there ſhall come againſt thee a people of fierce countenance, who ſhall not admire the face of an old man;* an old grave man, according to the common rules of civility, is to be had in admiration or high eſteem. Young ones ſhould lift up their faces to honour thoſe, whoſe faces hang down with age.

*Elevare caput
geſtus eſt erecti
animi confidentis
& nihil erub
eſcentis.
Pined.*

*Index animi
vultus.*

3. (Which I rather take for the meaning of this text) *lifting up of the face,* implieth ſtrong confidence. Thus *Abner* ſpeaks to *Aſahel*, *Turn thee aſide from following me; wherefore ſhould I ſmite thee to the ground? How then ſhould I hold up my face to Joab thy brother?* (*2 Sam. 2. 22.*) that is, how ſhall I come with any confidence or freedom of ſpirit, before *Joab*, if I ſhould ſlay thee? When *Cain* was rejected with his offering, (*Gen. 4. 5, 6, 7.*) the text ſaith, *He was very wroth, and his countenance, or his face fell:* which is directly oppoſite to lifting up the face. The falling of *Cains* face was in two things: Firſt, He fell from a chearful to a churlish countenance, he lookt doggedly and ſowerly; we ſay of ſuch a man, he hath a *down look*. Secondly, He fell from a confident; to a cowardly countenance. The fall of *Cains* countenance diſcovered the fear which fell upon *Cain's* heart; he did not bring the firſt offering with his heart, and he had no heart left to bring another offering *The face varieth as the minde varieth. That is ſeen in the face which is out of ſight:* The evidences of the heart are read there, and we may take the copy of a mans ſpirit in his countenance. Four things are chiefly ſeen in the face; 1. Pride: *The wicked through the pride of his countenance will not ſeek unto God,* (*Pſal. 10. 4.*) 2. Fear; *Dan. 5. 6. Then the Kings countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him.* That is, his thoughts being troubled at that dreadful apparition, his countenance changed

changed. 3. Envy and discontent, (*Gen. 31. 2, 5.*) *Labans countenance was not toward Jacob as before*; his face suffered an evil change, because God made a good change in the estate of Jacob; though *Laban* was a subtle man and a dissembler, yet his envy at the prosperity of *Jacob*, was too bigge to be dissembled.

4. Guilt, and shame the fruit of it appear in the face; *He dares not shew his face, whose wickednesse stares in his face.* The Lord said unto *Cain* (*Gen. 4. 7.*) *If thou do well, shalt thou not be accepted?* The word which we translate *accepted*, signifies properly to lift up, and so it may be rendred in that place; *if thou do well, thou shalt have a lifting up*, that is, *thou shalt lift up thy face upon as good termes as thy brother Abel*: uprightness hath boldnesse both with God and man. (*1 Joh. 3. 21.*) *If our heart condemne us not, then have we confidence (or freedom of speech) towards God.* They that are ashamed of what they have done, hang down their heads, or pull their hats over their eyes, they dare not be seen of men, much lesse of God, *who is of purer eyes then to behold iniquity.* *Thou shalt lift up thy face.*

Quem fadi aut pudet aut pœnit oculos deiecit. Erubuit gremioque pudor deiecit ocellos. Ovid. 6. Met. Si bene egeris. elevare, i.e. elevatio erit tibi.

Without spot.

The Original imports any kinde of blemish. Some tell us, that the word *Momus*, is derived from it, which signifies a *finder*, or one who makes it his businesse and study, to finde or make faults in what is done or spoken. To lift up the face without spot, is, to be without blemish, or blamelesse.

Denotat vitium corporis vel quicquid pulchritudinem destruit.

Spots in propriety of speech belong to the body. *Can the Leopard change his spots?* *Jer. 13. 23.* The Lamb for the Passeeover must be without spot, *Exod. 12. 5.* So must the Priests, *Lev. 2. 17.* As whatsoever stains the beauty, and darkens the light of the face, so whatsoever discomposeth the harmony, or hinders the comeliness of the whole body, comes under the proper sense of this word.

There is also a metaphorical spot, which is two fold: First, Upon the name or credit: so a mans dishonour is his spot; any blemish cast upon our reputation, is called an *aspersion*. Secondly, Upon the minde or inward man; so every sin is a spot. The Greek word for *unblameable*, or without sinful blemish, discovers it self plainly to be the offspring of this in the Hebrew. The soul takes spots as well as the body. Whatsoever blemisheth the beauty, or obscures the glory of the minde; whatsoever sullieth the

απορρε.

the credit, or obscures the dignity of man, comes under the metaphorical sence of this word.

Moses having exalted God in his perfections, *A God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he*, (Deut. 32. 4.) subjoins (the more to aggravate them) not the imperfections, but the grosse impieties of *Israel*, (ver. 5.) *They have corrupted themselves, their spot is not the spot of his children*; that is, their sin is not a sin of infirmity, such as often appears upon the children of God. They sin as if they had no relation to God; they sin like aliens, yea like rebels, not like children, not like members of the common-wealth of *Israel*. Any spot is bad, but some are worse. Sin-spots are the worst of spots, yet they are not all equally bad: There is a spot which is, and a spot which is not the spot of Gods children. The Apostle counsels the *Philippians* to take heed of these spots, as they desired to live in the reputation of children, (chap. 2. 15.) *That ye may be blamellesse and harmlesse, the sons of God without rebuke* (so we render,) or (as the Greek bears it clearly) *that ye may be the spotlesse sons of God*, that is, without all such spots as are unfutable to, or inconsistent with your sonship. Some are so bespotted, that they are called spots: *These*, saith the Apostle *Jude* (ver. 12.) *are spots in your feasts of charity*. He that hath many spots, is not forward to hold up his face, then how shall he who is a spot?

τινα οὐκ ἔστιν.
μὲν γὰρ.

But what is the spot intended in this text? There are three interpretations about it.

First, Some take it for the spot of grief and sorrow arising from affliction. *Thou shalt lift up thy face without spot*, that is, thou shalt get clear of these afflictions which spot thy face with sorrow. This sence alludes to that Chap. 9. v. 31. where *Job* complaineth, *though I wash my self, &c. yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch*, I shall be all mire and dirt, all to be spotted with troubles and sorrows, though I wash in the waters of repentance: No saith *Zophar*, if thou doest repent indeed, *thou shalt lift up thy face without spot*, God will throw thee into the dirt no more. Some translate from the letter of the Hebrew, *thou shalt lift up thy face out of the spot*, that is, thou shalt rise out of thy affliction, and recover out of thy mire of thy tribulations.

Hence Observe,

They who repent and get loose from sin, shall prosper, and get loose from sorrow.

Though

Though all our repentings, washings and purgings, cannot deserve freedom from the least evil, yet this is the way to such freedom; and when we (through the power of Christ) purge our selves from all filthinesse of flesh and spirit, we are in the fairest probability, in the neereſt poſſibility to be freed from the ſpots of tribulation and affliction. *Sin and ſorrow uſually come, and goe together*: When we fall into the mire of ſin, God caſts us into the mire of ſorrow; and though he often vary his diſpenſations, yet this is a truth, That when we get out of the mire of ſin, the Lord lifts us up out of the mire of ſorrow.

Secondly, Others take it for a *ſin-spot*. *If thou prepare thine heart, &c. then thou ſhalt lift up thy face without ſpot*, that is, the Lord will not take notice of thy ſin.

Hence note,

Though no man is without his ſpot, yet all beleevers are accounted ſpotleſſe.

Balaam confeſſeth Numb. 23. 21. *He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he ſeen perversneſſe in Iſrael*, that is, he charged no ſpot upon them at that time, they ſinned not perversely, nor did they lie impenitently in ſin; *Chriſt ſanctifieth and cleaſeth his Church with the waſhing of water by the word, that he may preſent it to himſelf a glorious Church, not having ſpot or wrinkle, or any ſuch thing, but that it ſhould be holy and without blemiſh*, Ephel. 5. 26, 27.

Thirdly, Many underſtand it of a *ſhame-spot*, which is the conſequent of ſin. *Thou ſhalt lift up thy face without ſpot*, that is, thou ſhalt not be aſhamed to lift up thy face, or when thou liſteſt up thy face, thou ſhalt have clear and free acceſſe to God. *No cloud ſhall ſit upon thy ſpirit to interrupt communion with him.*

Hence Obſerve,

Holineſſe of life and purity of conſcience, cauſe boldneſſe and confidence in our approaches to God.

The Apoſtle Peter chargeth husbands, to dwell with their *Wives* according to knowledge, and as being heirs of the ſame grace of life, that their prayers be not hindered, 1 Pet. 3. 7. Uneven or ſinfull walking in any relation, hinders prayer three waies. Firſt, It deads our ſpirits, ſtreightens our hearts, weakens our gifts for prayer. Secondly, It hinders the effect, fruit and ſucceſſe of prayer. Thirdly, It hinders us from the very act, it breeds a ſtrange-

R

neſſe

*De ruboris ob-
pudorem non
autem de pec-
cati macula zo-
pharem intelli-
gere exigit fa-
ciei elevatio.*

Bold.

*Elevare fa-
ciem ſine ma-
cula nihil aliud
eſt quam nil
conſcire ſibi
nulla pallescere
culpa. Id.*

ness between our souls and God, and makes us listlesse to the duty. The soul is unwilling to come into the presence of God, while sin sticks upon the conscience: such as have no heart to come before God, cannot lift up their faces to him. It is said of the poor Publican *Luk. 18.* that he durst not lift up his eyes to heaven, *he had low thoughts of himself, and his posture was lowly.* The Publican had no purpose to continue in sin, yet because his conscience was not cleared of sin, he durst not lift up his face to heaven, but standing afar off sayes, *God be merciful to me a sinner. Guilt clogs the soul.* How shall an unholy heart converse with a holy God? When we lift up our faces, or give good looks to sinne, we cannot lift up our faces to, or expect a good look from God. They whose hypocrisie is so vigorous, that they can at once look upon sin with joy, and upon God with confidence, shall at last to their sorrow finde God rejecting their confidences; and indeed he is not confident but impudent, who hopes for favour from God, while himself make sin his favourite. Those hypocrites went thus high, whom the Lord upbraids *Jer. 7. 9.* *Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and come and stand before me in this place? Some hypocrites seem to have a very lively hope, yet the hope of all hypocrites shall be as the giving up of the Ghost.*

Lastly, The spot from which *Job* is promised freedom, is expounded for *disgrace or dishonour.* *Job* was bespattered by his friends as a wicked man, as the worst of wicked men, an hypocrite.

Hence Observe,

It is a great mercy to have our credit cleared up from those blemishes which the uncharitable suspicions or rash censures of men have cast upon us.

There is no spot except that upon the conscience which is so unbeautiful as that upon our credit. He hath little to lose in this world who hath lost his good name: And if the losse of credit be so great an affliction, the reparation of it cannot be a small mercy. *David* was a man spotted with the imputation of rebellion, *Saul* lookt upon him as a traytour: It was a high favour which God gave him, when he gave him back his good name: when he caused him to lift up his face without spot, yea without spot in the eye of *Saul*, *Saul acquitted him, and said, thou art more righteous than I. The Lord brought forth his righteousness as the light,*
and

and his just dealings as the noon-day, Psal. 37. 6. His righteousness lay in the dark, and his just dealing was adjudged treachery and deceit: Yet at last he recovered his credit, and his name was clothed with honour in the estimation of his adversaries. This is the first promise, *Thou shalt lift up thy face without spot.* The second is.

Yea thou shalt be stedfast.

It is a happiness to get a good estate, but it is a greater happiness to keep it. *Thou shalt be stedfast.* The Hebrew word, in the verb, signifies to melt or dissolve; and in the adjective, *strong durable and compact*; that which is melted is called compact, either by the figure antiphrasis, because it is uncompact, or, according to the nature of the thing, because mettals which have been melted grow more compact and soild when they cool again. Some render it here, *Thou shalt be like a molten pillar*; brasse or iron being molten and cast into the figure of a pillar, are strong and stedd; the word is so rendered, (1 Sam. 2. 8.) *The pillars* (that is the firmest and strongest parts) *of the earth, are the Lords.* This promised stedfastnesse may be taken two wayes.

First, In reference to his externals, as if Zophar had said. *Thou wast once Master of a good estate, thou wast once rich and full, but thy estate, thy riches were not stedfast, thou hast lost all, thy wealth is consumed and gone; yet humble thy self, and thou shalt lift up thy face, thou shalt not only be exalted but established. Thou shalt be stedfast.*

Secondly, Stedfastnes may referre to his internals, and so there may be a four fold stedfastnes.

1. Of judgement, When a man holds to his profession, and fleets not in opinion. The Apostle cautions his Ephesians (chap. 4. 14.) *Be no more children tossed too and fro, with every wind of doctrine: be firm to your principles, be not as a meteor carried about with every gust, but as a star fixed in your orb.*

2. There is a stedfastnesse of resolution, 1 Cor. 15. 58. *Be ye stedfast and unmoveable, that is, hold to your purpose: serve the Lord, and go on in his work, let nothing take you off: Such was the masculine stedfastnesse of Queen Hester, resolving to doe her duty in the face of danger, If I perish, I perish.*

3. There is a stedfastnes of faith, When we beleeve and do not waver, or hesitate Jam 1. 6. The Apostle Paul speaks of the so-

פִּי
Fudit, liquefa-
cit durus com-
pactus, vel per
antiphrasin, vel
quod metalla
fusa consoli-
dantur.
Hinc פִּי
fusus, in hoc
libro passim su-
mitur pro פִּי
forti valido.
Merc.

επι' αμαρ
της' ιου.

lidity of the firmament of faith, Col. 2. 5. *Rejoycing in your order and the stedfastnes of your faith in Christ.* And Peter exhorts to resist the devil, being *stedfast in the faith*, 1 Pet. 5. 9. *He that fights must look to his footing. We cannot resist another till we are settled our selves.*

4. There is a stedfastnes of conscience; Conscience is full of uncertainties till we settle upon Christ: the stedfastnes of conscience ariseth from the peace of conscience, and our peace flows to us in the blood of the covenant.

We may understand this promise of outward, but especially of inward stedfastnesse; of the stedfastnesse of his faith and the quietnesse of his conscience; that he should no longer hang between hope and fear, between perswasions and doubtings of the love of God.

Hence Observe,

Grace establiseth the heart.

Gratia reddit
hominem con-
stantem fir-
mum secure &
constanter a-
gentem, mini-
me presumen-
tem. Pined.

Put away sin, and thou shalt be stedfast. Grace is brought in to the heart by Christ: Grace and Christ can never part, the doctrine of grace is therefore said to establisth the heart, because Christ is in it, Heb. 13. 9. *It is a good thing that the heart be establisth with grace, not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein: when he saith it is good, he means, it is better that the heart be establisth by grace then by meat.* For meat doth in a sence establisth the heart, that is, it recreates and refreshes the heart. As Abraham speaks to the three men whom he invited to his tent Gen. 18. 5. *I will fetch a morsell of bread, and comfort ye your hearts,* the Hebrew is, *stay or establisth your hearts.* But the lasting comfort and establishment of the heart, is by grace; that is, with grace wrought in the heart, or with the doctrine of grace (which is a means of working that grace) for he opposeth grace to meats, about which questions were then started, and many were unsetled; and with meats he understands by a *Synecdoche* the whole body of the ceremoniall law, which is opposed to the Gospel, or the doctrine of grace: as if he had said, do not think to settle your selves by the ceremoniall law, one part whereof consisted in the choice and distinction of meats, for they *have not profited them that have been occupied therein*, they have gotten no establishment by them, but grace will doe it: As your fathers did eat Manna in the wilderness, so meats of the sacrifice in Canaan, and are dead, but he that feeds upon

upon Christ, and is filled with grace, shall live for ever. Meats profited them so little, that they are said not to profit them; they administred only a transient help to the body; but grace profits so much, that it only may be said to profit: that administers a permanent advantage to the soul. Grace renders us alwayes the same, and preserves us from change. **Inconstancy is the companion of sin: yea inconstancy is the companion of all earthly things; earthly things move and are unsteady; it is impossible to stand fast upon an unsteady foundation.** The Apostle (Eph. 4. 13.) describeth the Gentiles thus. *I say unto you* (speaking to the Saints) *that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, ye were Gentiles, but now I would not have you walk as other Gentiles,* namely as unconverted Gentiles, Doe not imitate them from whom you have made so happy a departure; but how did they walk? *In the vanity of their minde,* that is, in the unsetlednesse *Impius non potest esse firmus.* and unconstancy and unstaidnesse of their mindes; you have received grace, and grace should make you firm and stable upon your basis, upon Christ your bottom. The holy Ghost reproves this unsetlednes in the old Jews (Jer. 2. 23.) *Thou art a swift Dromedary traversing her wayes,* (never settled in any away, vers. 36.) *why gaddest thou about so much to change thy way? thou also shalt be ashamed of Egypt, as thou wast ashamed of Assyria;* thou wentest to this kingdome and to the other nation for help, and here thou thoughtest to strengthen thy self, and there to obtain deliverance; *Why gaddest thou about so much?* the world being uncertain leaves thee in perpetuall uncertainties, thou couldst find no help in *Assyria*, thou shalt find none in *Egypt*, neither the one nor the other shall be able to establish thee. So chap. 31. v. 22. *How long wilt thou go about, O thou back-sliding daughter?* **We are in continuall motion till we settle in God. As the needle in the Mariners compasse being toucht with the loadstone is unquiet till it points to the North, and there it settles: so it is with the soul, to what quarter of the creature soever we turn our selves, we shall be unsetled, wavering and unsteady till we point directly unto God, till we look heavenward. The heart finds no ground, till it gets off the earth.**

There is a double unsetdfastnesse which sin brings in, and grace casts out.

First, About our way, many are alwayes to choose; whether this way or that, is their quære: they not only (which is the in-

firmity of many of the Saints) halt in their way, but between two ways. An upright heart may be unsteady in the right way; but a carnal heart is unsteady between the right way and the wrong. Such are sometimes in good wayes, and sometimes in evil wayes, they may happen upon a good way, but they cannot chuse it, or if they chuse it, it is not for its goodnesse but commodiousnesse; it serves their turns, and upon that account they take a turn in it.

Secondly, They are unsteadfast about the end; A wicked man is often secure, but he is never settled concerning his end. He presumes he shall be well, but he cannot know it shall be well with him. They who walk in dark wayes, must needs be in the dark about their end. An evil minde is never quiet upon good termes. They who are morally evil, have no true reason to expect eternal good. There is a quietness of minde concerning our end, which ariseth from the ignorance of our ill estate, and there is a quietnesse which ariseth from the knowledge of our good estate: in the former sense many wicked men are quiet, their consciences do not trouble them, and they wonder why any mans should. These are asleep in the darknesse of sin, and they shall lye down in the darknesse of sorrow. Only he that findes himself united unto Christ, and by vertue of that union, cleansed from the guilt, and relieved against the dominion of sin, is steadfast indeed. *Him wilt thou establish (saith the Prophet) in perfect peace, whose minde is stayed on thee.* It is a baltard peace which is the daughter of ignorance, *true peace is the daughter of saving knowledge.*

Lastly, As this stedfastness is understood of his outward estate. We learn,

That God only can establish the creature to us.

The fashion of the world passeth away, yet God can bid it stand. The creature can be no more to us then God makes it, how much so ever we make it in our account. *David* calls his outward estate a mountain, *Psal. 30. 6, 7.* yet he acknowledgeth that all the strength and standing of his mountain was from God. *Lord by thy favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong.* And he found his mountain shaking, yea and his heart shaking too, when God did but hide his face. *Thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled.* That's the second thing promised. There is yet a third, *viz.*

And

And thou shalt not fear.

He carries it higher yet. There is an holy fear, and there is a sinfull fear. There is a fear of care, and there is a fear of distraction. There is a fear of watchfulnesse, and there is a fear of distrustfulnesse. He doth not mean the holy fear of care and watchfulnesse; but the sinfull fear of distraction and distrustfulnesse, *Psal. 112. 1. Blessed is the man that feareth God, Why? vers. 7. 8. He shall not be afraid, he that feareth holily, shall not be afraid distractingly.* Again, This exemption from fear doth not leave us secure; It is *Babylon* which saith, *I sit as a Queen and am no widdow, and shall see no sorrow.* She is so fearlesse that she is also carelesse. The more *Jerusalem* and her children know their safety, the more they labour to be safe.

Thou shalt not fear. This negative promise may have a three-fold reference. *Thou shalt not fear*: First, The continuance of thy present troubles. Nor secondly, The return of these troubles. Nor thirdly, The rising of new troubles. Thy heart shall be farre above all these fears.

Hence Observe,

First, *To get free from sin, is the way to get free from fear.*

Put away iniquity, and then thou shalt not fear. As by fear we keep from iniquity (*The fear of the Lord is to depart from evil,*) so by departing from iniquity we keep from fear: An evil conscience is a troubled conscience: *God is above all fear; and man is never without fear till he is in God. (Prov. 21. 1.)* The righteous is bold as a lyon.

Mala conscientia nunquam est sine metu. Extra Deum nihil est firmum, unde efficitur ut nemo extra Deum possit esse sine metu. Sanct.

Secondly, *To be free from the fear of evil, is better than to be freed from evil.*

He doth not say barely, thou shalt be freed from evil, but, Thou shalt be freed from fear. *Happiness consists more in removing inward than outward trouble.* He that is not indeed afraid of evil before it comes, may be happy though it comes. It is the perfection of our spiritual estate not to fear: *Perfect love casteth out fear: (1 Joh. 4. 18.)* It casteth out all fear that we shall loose the favour of God, or be cast out of his love: it doth not cast out the fear of offending God, but that whereby we question the favour of God. Whatsoever the premises of Gods dealings are, such souls makes this conclusion, That God will doe them no hurt, and means them nothing but good. *A great part of the Saints portion both*

on

on earth and in heaven, lies in their deliverance from fear. And if any ask, how can this be? The next verse answers,

Verse 16. *Because thou shalt forget thy misery, and remember it as waters that passe away.*

עַמְלֵךְ תִּשְׁכַּח

*Laborum obli-
visceris.*

These words give us a reason of the former. *Thou shalt not fear, because thou shalt forget thy misery, Or thy labour.* As we do not feel, so we cannot fear that which we have forgotten: and he who is delivered from dangers, is much armed against the fear of danger; while he well considers how he overcame those which are past, he sees whatsoever may come, as already conquered.

Thou shalt forget.

This forgetfullnesse implies two things.

First, That he should be long free from such evils as had oppressed him, so long, that he should forget that he was ever oppressed by such evils: The fruit of a long freedom from trouble, is forgetfullnesse of that trouble. The Lord saith of his people in *Babylon*, *they have been lost sheep; their shepherds have caused them to go astray, they have gone from mountain to hill, they have forgotten their resting place* (Jer. 50. 6.) now as sheep having gone long astray, forget their former folds and resting places, so they who have been long freed from misery, forget their misery. *Length of time wears out the remembrance both of the good we have enjoyed, and of the evils we have suffered.* Thus God encourageth the believing Gentiles, *Isa. 54. 4. Fear not, for thou shalt not be ashamed, neither be thou confounded, for thou shalt not be put to shame: for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood.* The shame of their youth, was their bondage in *Egypt*: the reproach of their widowhood, was their captivity in *Babylon*; here the Lord promiseth such a mercy, as shall swallow up the memory of both. As a great mercy puts out the memory of a lesser (Jer. 16. 14, 15. The deliverance out of the Babylonish captivity, swallowed up that deliverance from Egyptian bondage;) so great mercies long continued, swallow up the remembrance of all our miseries.

Secondly, This *forgetting* notes such a removall of former evils, that not so much as a scarr, or any print of them should remain to be seen: while the scarr of a wound remains, the memory of it cannot but remain. When *Joseph* interpreted *Pharaohs* dream about

about the seven years of plenty, and the seven years of famine, (Gen. 41. 13.) he saith there should be such a famine upon the land after the seven years of plenty, that the *seven years of plenty should be forgotten*; why forgotten? because there should be no print, no signe left of plenty: so the Lord sometimes after seven years of famine, after seven years of poverty or trouble, gives seven years of such plenty, peace, rest and comfort to his people, *as wear out all the marks of their former afflictions*. When Josephs brethren feared he would remember the wrongs which they had done him, he answers as if he would assure them that there was not the least print of them left in his minde, Gen. 50. 21. *Fear ye not, I will nourish you and your little ones*. He hath forgotten all received injuries, who resolves to return curtesies. **He is farthest from revenge, who is ready to feed his enemy.** Thus saith Zophar, *Thou shalt forget thy misery*, the Lord will heal thy wound so perfectly, that there shall not be so much as any mark of it remaining. The forgetfullnesse of misery, cannot but spring from an eminent succession of the contrary mercie. The Prophet describes such a change and this effect of it. Isa. 65. 13. *My servants shall eat, and ye shall be hungry, my servants shall drink, but ye shall be thirsty, my servants shall rejoice, but ye shall be ashamed*; hence v. 16. *He that blesseth himself in the earth, shall blesse himself in the God of truth, because the former troubles are forgotten*. **Eating causeth us to forget hunger, so doth drinking thirst, and rejoycing, shame.** Thus saith Christ, *A woman after sore travell remembers her anguish no more, for joy that a man is born into the world*, Joh. 16. 21. Either of these waies Zophar may be expounded *Thou shalt forget thy misery*, that is, thou shalt have freedom from thy misery, till the memory and marks of it are quite worn out; such a series of mercies shall succeed thy troubles, as shall make thee doubt whether thou wast at all in trouble: **Thus to forget misery, is to be perfectly happy**, and in the issue both these met in Job: The long continuance, and the abundance of mercy which he received, made him discount all the evil which he had endured.

Thou shalt forget.

But how could he forget? For the clearing of this and other Scriptures of the same stile, take this distinction. There is a double forgetfullnesse. First, in reference to the rationall part.

6

Secondly,

*Quantum at-
tinet ad ſci-
entiam rationa-
lem memor
præteritorum
malorum,
quantam au-
tem ad expe-
rientis ſenſum
prioris imme-
mor. Aug. de
Civit. Dei l. 22.
c. 30.*

Secondly, in reference to the ſenſitive part. He is not promiſed (for that were an affliction) forgetfulneſſe of his afflictions in reference to his ratiſonall part, he ſhould remember them ſtill ſo as to conſider what they were, and to be thankfull for his deliverance out of them. In this ſenſe, they who have the greateſt cauſe to forget theſe miſeries, have alſo greateſt cauſe to remember them; it is the will of God we ſhould. *As it is a ſin affectedly to forget the ſins we have committed and are pardoned, ſo to affect a forgetfulneſſe of the ſorrows we have ſuffered, and are eſcaped, is ſin-
full; God receives much glory by our recognizing of pardoned ſins,
and of eſcaped ſorrows.*

*Hæc olim me-
miniſſe juva-
bit.*

But in reference to a ſenſibleneſſe of thoſe evils, or of any trouble ariſing from the remembrance of them, thus he is promiſed to forget them. As if Zophar had ſaid, *When thou thinkeſt of thy affliction it ſhall not afflict thee, yea it ſhall be thy joy to remember it.* It is a great refreshing to remember the troubles which we have been in, and are freed from. When Joſeph was advanced in the Court of Pharaoh to great honour, and was married there, he called the name of his firſt-born ſon *Manaſſeh*, from this word ſignifying to forget, and he gives the reaſon of it, *for God hath made me forget all my toil and all my fathers houſe, (Gen. 41. 51.)* How had God made him to forget it? Not in regard of the ratiſonall act, for he did remember what his fathers houſe was, together with all the afflictions he met with there from his envious brethren, and this was his duty: but the Lord made him forget all the pain, ſmart and ſorrow of thoſe afflictions, *He was very ſenſible how much he had ſuffered, but he had no ſence of it.* In heaven we ſhall forget all the troubles and ſtorms of this life, and all our ſins, as they are any hinderance to our joy, but there ſhall be a remembrance even in heaven, of the troubles and ſins of this life, ſo far, as to give God the glory of making that glorious change. As we may be ſaid not to know evils two waies, either becauſe we are ignorant of them, or becauſe we have no experience of them; ſo we may be ſaid not to remember paſt evils two waies; either becauſe the memory of them doth not ſtay with us, or becauſe the remembrance of them doth not annoy us. And that's the meaning of forgetfulneſſe about injuries; when we exhort not only to forgive a wrong, but to forget it: A man may ratiſonally remember the wrong which another had done him, with all the circumſtances and paſſages of it, and yet forget it ſpiritually. Some ſay, *they*

*Anima beata
fruens indefi-
cienter æternu-
rum jucundi-
tate gaudio-
rum, oblita eris
culparum, obli-
ta pœnarum;
nec tamen ideo
ſua liberationis
oblita, ut libe-
ratori ſuo ſit
ingrata. Aug.
ubi ſupra.*

they are content to forgive an injury, but they can never forget it; I say, forget it so far as to forgive it fully, and then remember it as much as you will. The naturall memory of injuries is no sin, but the angry and revengefull memory. God in the new Covenant is said to forget the sins of his people, and to remember them no more; but doth he forget any thing, or doth it slip out of his memory? No, he knows all things by one everlasting act, and he remembers even all the sins of his elect, he remembers all the sins which he hath pardoned; but he is said not to remember them, or to forget them when he pardons them, because they are before him as if they were not remembred, that is, he is not provoked by those sins, his Spirit is not drawn out in revenges against such sinners as he hath pardoned. Thus in the text before us: *Job* being delivered from his outward afflictions and inward temptations, is assured he shall forget them; not that the rationall act should be deleted and blotted out, but the sensitive: the trouble of this troubles, the afflictivenesse of his afflictions should be removed, he should remember sorrow to his sorrow no more.

Seeing it is promised *Job* that he shall forget his misery;

Hence Observe, That,

The very representation of evils past, may be a present pressing evil.

The representation of past afflictions, is sometimes very afflictive. As a man by considering his former comforts, may take in comfort; or by reflecting upon, and remembring his former sins, may sin over all his sins: so by remembring his former sorrows, he may have a new indurance and impression upon his spirit of all his sorrows. *It is a mercy when evils are remembred without a taste of evil; and when a review of former sorrows doth not revive our sorrows.*

Secondly Observe, *Thou shalt forget thy misery.*

Forgetfulness is the cure of all our sorrows.

The forgetfulness of some things is a sin, and the forgetfulness of other things is a priviledge. To forget our duties, to forget the minde of God made known unto us, is our sin; but (as explained) to forget the trouble and affliction which hath been upon us, is a speciall priviledge; It is sin to forget the history of our troubles, but it is mercy to forget the pain of them. Forgetfulness is good for little; only the forgetfulness of the evil of sin, or of evil customs, so as not to practise them again; and the

forgetfullnes of the evils of punishment, or of our evil condition, so as not to be oppressed with them, is good, and the cure of all those evils. When the word preached hath wounded the heart of a wicked man, and made it smart, what is his cure? his cure is to cast the word out of his thoughts, and to forget it, or as much of it as he can; if he can but forget the word, his cure is wrought, and he is whole again; though indeed, such a mans remedy is worse then his disease, and his plaister then his pain, yet he hath got (such as it is) a cure. Thus also the forgetfullnesse of our troubles is the remedy of our troubles, as sleep is of our forest travels. (*Psalm. 27. 2.*) *So he giveth his beloved sleep;* So, how is that? that is, notwithstanding all the hard labour and pains they take, yet the Lord giveth them sleep, and sleep makes them forget all their former labour. So some interpret those words, (*Psalm. 126. 2.*) *We were like them that dream,* that is, when the Lord began to work deliverance, to turn again the captivity of *Zion*; we (as it were) forgot what our state and condition but lately was; a dreamer forgets how it was with him; so, we are as them that dream, we have forgotten all the evils we have been in, even the long time of our captivity. When a friend is in great pain, such as the tooth-ach, &c. we say to him (in a meriment) *do but forget it a while and you shall be cured.* You may write (*probatum est*) upon this receipt, if you can receive it. But it is God only that can cause us to receive it, he only can work this forgetfullnesse of evil, as he only works a true remembrance of what is good. **Some men have taught an art of memory, but 'tis God must teach this art of forgetfullnesse; this forgetfullnesse proceeds from the grace or favour of God.** Heathens speak much of the river *Lethes*, of which if a man did drink, he presently lost his memory, and forgot all that he had either enjoyed or endured. *Lemuel* (*Prov. 31. 4.*) would not have *Kings drink wine*, (that is, immoderately) *lest they drink and forget the law* (*vers. 5.*) but he adviseth (*vers. 6.*) *to give strong drink to him that is ready to perish, and wine unto those that are of heavy hearts.* Let him drink and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more (*v. 7.*) Of this wine some understand that of the Evangelist *Marke*, in his description of Christs passion (*c. 15. v. 22.*) *They gave him wine to drink mingled with mirrhe, but he received it not.* Naturalists observe, that mirrhe stupifies and dulls the sense of pain; but Christ bid pain do its worst, he needed not forget

*Multimodis se-
se commaculat
ichibus, Myrrha
presumptione
munitus.
Apul. l. 8.*

forget it who was able to conquer it; his Spirit was infinitely above such reliefs. But to the point, as there is a naturall and an artificiall way to cause forgetfullnesse of misery, so there is a supernaturall. God can give his people to drink of such a *mysticall Lethes*, he can give them a cup of such a river of consolation, as shall drown the memory of all their sorrows. As when a table-book is written all over, you may take a sponge and wipe out every letter, so when our memories are full of our miseries, the Lord can sponge all out, and not leave so much as one line or letter to be read any more.

Thirdly, *Zophar* puts this forgetfullnesse of his misery, as a consequent of *Jobs* putting away of his iniquity.

Hence, Observe,

When the hand and heart are clear of sin, former sufferings will not be grievous to us.

So long as a man continues in sin, not only his present, but his past sufferings are his torment: put away iniquity, and thou puttest away the tormenting thoughts of thy misery; thou shalt not feed upon the *wormwood* and the *gall*, as the Church did, (*Lam. 3. v. 19.*) while she remembered her affliction: the blow was past, but the remembrance of it was as bitter as gall, and as unpleasant as a dinner of wormwood. In heaven, or in that perfect state of blessednesse which is promised (*Rev. 7. 17.*) *God will wipe away all tears from our eyes*, because then he will for ever cast every sin out of our hearts and lives. The captive *Jews* in *Babylon* kept their sins too close, and therefore when they sate down by the river, and remembered *Zion*, they wept (*Psal. 137.*) the sorrows and afflictions which they had in *Zion*, as well as their love to *Zion*, made them weep in *Babylon*, though while they were in *Babylon*, they lived free from sorrow, so free, that many of them could not be got out of *Babylon* when God called them away (*Zech. 2. 6.*) and when *Cyrus* had proclaimed them a full liberty to go away (*Ezra 1. 3.*) yet say they, *when we remembered thee, O Zion, we wept.* The remembrance of former troubles will afflict, till we are cleared from the guilt, and have subdued the power of sin. Thou shalt forget thy misery.

And remember it as waters that passe away.

Some read these and the words before, not as a promise, but as an exhortation, *Do thou forget thy misery, or remember it as*

waters that passe away. As if he had said, Thou poorest too much upon thy sorrows, I counsel thee to forget them, let them be as a river swallowed up in the sea of an eternall oblivion.

But I conceive this latter clause to be an explication of the former. For if any ask, How shall he forget his miseries? Heer's the answer, he shall forget them as *waters that passe away*. This similitude is more than once used in Scripture, to note utter forgetfulness; *Job* (Chap. 6. 15.) compares his friends to *the stream of brooks that passe away*, because they had forgotten the laws of friendship. *David* imprecates vengeance on his enemies in a like phrase, (*Psal.* 58. 7.) *Let them melt away as waters that run continually*; that is, let them and their memoriall perish.

Non recordaberis amplius, nam aquarum quæ præterierunt nulla penitus recordatio est.

Who takes notice or remembers the waters that passe in a river, or under a bridge? When the woman of *Tekoah* would shew that they were all as lost and buried in oblivion, if *David* did not fetch home his banished; she expresseth it thus, *We must needs die, and are as water spilt upon the ground, which (passeth away, and) cannot be gathered up again*, 2 *Sam.* 14. 14.

This may be interpreted, first as an allusion, either strictly to *Noah's flood*. Thou shalt remember it as *waters that passe away*, that is, thou shalt remember the flood of all thy sorrows and afflictions, as thou dost remember the *flood of Noah*, of which, no doubt, *Job* had heard. The Lord in the Prophet *Isaiah*, Chap. 54. vers. 9. speaks of the removall of his peoples affliction under that notion; *For this is as the waters of Noah unto me, for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth, so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, &c.* So here, thy afflictions shall be as the waters of *Noah* that are past. Thy troubles swell now very high, thou sufferest a deluge, an inundation of sorrows, but they shall be dried-up, and shall not leave so much as their slime for a token that they have been there.

Or more generally, as an allusion to all sudden torrents, or the rising of waters upon the fall of great raines in the southern parts of the world, of which the 126. *Psalme* is a great proof; waters in those regions swell in a moment, and are down almost as soon as swoln; having no constant fountain to feed them, they cannot continue. So saith he, a mighty flood of trouble and sorrow overwhelmeth thee, but it shall quickly dry up, it is but a cloud, a storm, it will passe away and be spent sooner then thou dreamest, even so soon, that thou shalt be like one that dreameth.

Secondly,

Secondly, It may be taken as a proverbiall speech; *You shall remember it as waters that passe away*, that is, you shall not remember it; it shall be as it had not been. Who can tell what waters have past? or where to finde those waters which are past? to remember a thing, as waters that passe away, is to let it passe out of memory. Some things leave lasting impressions behind them, but a sudden passing water doth not.

*Proverbialem
reor hunc lo-
quendi modum
quo significa-
tur alicujus
sive boni sive
mali quod jam
præterit nihil
esse reliquum.
Sanct.*

Thirdly, We may interpret it thus, *Thou shalt remember it as waters that passe away*, that is, thou shalt remember it as that which shall never return again, or is quite gone and shall never trouble thee any more. Some expound that of the Prophet so, *affliction shall not rise up the second time* (Nah. 1. 9.) (which others, and I think rightly, interpret of an utter consumption; there shall be no need for affliction to come the second time, for it shall spoil all at first: Thy affliction shall make a totall devastation.) Yet it may be taken in the sense suggested. Affliction shall not rise up the second time, that is, *thou shalt not be afflicted the second time*: The waters of affliction are passed away, and shall not flow back again. Job (Chap. 28. 4.) speaks of *waters forgotten of the foot*; he means (as is conceived) waters so deep, that no man could passe thorow them, and are therefore said to be *forgotten of the foot*, because no foot had passed them of a long time, nor was any like to passe them any more. Thus also an affliction thorow which a man shall never passe again, may be called a *forgotten affliction*. Hence when the Prophet had said (Nah. 1. 9.) that *affliction should not rise up the second time*, he adds from the Lord, (vers. 12.) *I have afflicted thee, I will afflict thee no more*. This I apprehend as the proper meaning of the text in hand, *Thou shalt forget thy misery, or if thou dost remember it, thou shalt remember it but as waters that are passed away. Thy misery will be as nothing to thee, and shall never return upon thee.*

Hence Observe,

The memory of miseries which shall never return to hurt us, comforts us.

It is our joy to remember those things which were our sorrow, when we are beyond the borders of sorrow; such a remembrance is as joyous, as the remembrance of an evil, whose return we fear is grievous. The very suspition that an affliction will renew, reneweth our affliction. Then we feed heartily upon the good which is before us, when we are freed from the afterclaps or

*Asiserrima est
matorum im-
pendentium ex-
pectatio. Merl.*

after-

*Miserum est
fuisse felicem.*

after-reckonings of evil. That the Israelites were delivered from those Egyptian taskmasters, was very sweet, but to see them at their heels and upon their backs again was exceeding bitter: Hence the Lord to relieve them from those thoughts, gave them this assurance by *Moses* (Exod. 14. 13.) *The Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever*; It is not so great a losse not to see, as it is a trouble to see what we would not; The King of *Babylon* slew the sons of *Zedekiah* before his eyes, before he put out his eyes (Jer. 39. 6, 7. doubtlesse the putting of his eyes to that use, pained him more then the putting of them out. Now as it is a misery worse then blindness, to see that which grieves us, so it is a mercy as good as sight it self, not to see what would grieve us; especially to receive a faithfull promise, that we shall see it again no more for ever. And as it adds to the affliction of a man in misery, to remember that he hath enjoyed friends and good daies, which he shall not enjoy nor see again any more for ever. So it adds to the comfort of a man encompassed about with mercies, to remember he hath endured sorrows, and been oppressed by enemies, which we shall not endure nor be oppressed by, no nor see again any more for ever. This is the priviledge of the Saints, in reference to that greatest enemy *sin*, they remember their sins as waters that are passed away; they shall never return to hurt them, much lesse to condemn them. Thus to remember our sins on earth is a piece of heaven, and will be a great part of our happinesse in heaven; where we shall say in highest triumph and exultation of spirit, concerning sin and Satan, death and sorrow, or whatsoever hath the face, or deserves to wear the name of a mysticall Egyptian, These Egyptians whom we have seen and felt so often in the daies of our mortality, we shall not feel, no nor so much as see them again any more for ever.

JOB Chap. 11. Verſ. 17, 18, 19, 20.

And thine age ſhall be clearer than the noon-day; thou ſhalt ſhine forth, thou ſhalt be as the morning.

And thou ſhalt be ſecure, becauſe there is hope, yea, thou ſhalt dig about thee, and thou ſhalt take thy reſt in ſafety.

Alſo thou ſhalt lie down, and none ſhall make thee afraid: yea, many ſhall make ſuite unto thee.

But the eyes of the wicked ſhall fail, and they ſhall not eſcape, and their hope ſhall be as the giving up of the ghoſt.

THis latter part of the Chapter, conſiſteth (as was touched before) of divers motives and encouragements, which Zophar beſtows on Job, to hearten him on in hearkening to his counſel. As he was encouraged before by a promiſe that his preſent troubles ſhould ſuddenly expire, ſo here, that ancient mercies ſhould ſuddenly revive. As if Zophar had ſaid, Thou ſhalt be bleſſed not only by deliverances from, or removals of evil; thou ſhalt not only forget miſery, and have the prints of thy afflictions wiped out; but thou ſhalt be fairly ſtampt with freſh favours, and the beſt of bleſſings ſhall be heaped upon thee. This he expreſſeth in thoſe elegant metaphors and compariſons.

Verſe 17. *Thine age ſhall be clearer than the noon-day, thou ſhalt ſhine forth, thou ſhalt be as the morning.*

All which he exemplifieth in plain aſſertions, aſſuring him that he ſhall ſpend the latter part of his life in ſafety. verſ. 18. *Thou ſhalt be ſecure, &c.* In freedome and honour. verſ. 19. *None ſhall make thee afraid, yea, many ſhall make ſuite unto thee.* The ungodly are not ſo. verſe 20. *The eyes of the wicked ſhall fail, &c.*

Thine age.

חַיֵּיךָ

Tempus, ſeculum, ævum, ſæc.

Et vitæ curriculum citò ceſſantem ſignificat quaſi per metatheſin a ceſſare.

The Hebrew word ſignifies time in generall, or the whole ſtate of this world. David prayeth to be delivered from the men of this world, or, of this age; (Pſal. 17. 14.) he means it of men who have nothing beyond the world, all whoſe eſtate lies on this ſide heaven. The word ſignifies alſo the particular age of a mans

T

life:

*Quaſi meridia-
nus fulgor con-
ſurget tibi ad
veſperam. Vulg.*

life : and here diſtinctly the latter part or old age of a mans life. *Thine age*, that is, *thine old age*, or the latter part of thy life, of which thou ſeemeſt to make little reckoning, upon which thou lookeſt as if it were not worth the having ; that latter part of thy life, of which thou ſay'ſt in thine heart, ſurely it will be as death to me, it will be full of death and darkneſſe, of diſeaſes and of weakneſſes, the ſtrength of it will be but labour and ſorrow ; that evening of thy life, of which thou judgeſt (according to the experience of others) ſurely it will be dim and miſty, cloudy and uncomfortable, even that age of thine ſhall be

Clearer then the noon-day.

The letter is, *Thine age ſhall riſe above the noon-day*. The noon-day is taken two wayes. Sometimes for extream heat, and ſometimes for extream light.

*Eſto illis ju-
cundum refri-
gerium à me-
ridiano aſtu.*
Jun.

First, At noon, we expect the extremity of heat ; the ſun of perfection is ſignified by the noon-day. *Iſa. 16. 3. Make thy ſhadow at the night in the miſt of the noon-day*. That is, be a reſreſhing and a protection to my people when their troubles are at the hotteſt. And *Cant. 1. 7. Tell me where thou makeſt thy ſlocks to reſt at noon*, that is, in the heat of perfection. The Church deſired to underſtand where to ſhelter, what cooling place was to be had in the times of greateſt tribulation.

*Notum prover-
biale eſt, luce
meridiana cla-
ria, item lucer-
eam accendit
in meridie.*

*Lux felicitatis
ſymbolum.
Vita jucunda
& quaſi Lumi-
noſa. Coc.
Summa erit
lætitia tua.
Merc.*

Secondly, Noon imports the cleareſt light ; it is a common proverb when we affirm a thing to have the greateſt clearneſſe, to ſay, *It is as clear as the light at noon-day*. And to light a candle at noon, is a proverb of reproof to thoſe, who trouble themſelves to make that plain which hath no obſcurity in it. And as noon is put for light, ſo light is often put for joy, and cleareſt light (ſuch is that of the noon-day) for greateſt joy ; *light is ſown for the righteous*, that is, they ſhall reap a harveſt of joy.

When *Zaphar* promiſeth, *Thine age ſhall be clearer than the noon-day*, his meaning is, thy latter end ſhall be full of comfort, and thou ſhalt rejoice in the ſerenity of thy condition.

Hence Obſerve,

God can make the worſt part of our life the beſt to us : and when we expect (according to the courſe of nature) the leaſt good, he can encompaſſe us with the choiceſt good.

Old age is called the evil day (*Eccl. 12. 1.*) and the deſcription of it is given in termes very appoſite unto this, *while the evil dayes come*

come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou ſhalt ſay I have no pleaſure in them; while the ſun, or the light, or the moon, or the ſtars be not darkned, nor the clouds return after the rain. He compar-eth old age to a gloomy day, when ſhadow falls after ſhadow, and cloud follows after cloud; yet the Lord can make that age which uſually gives nothing but clouds and ſhadows, but moiſture and wet, to be as clear as the light at noon, and as dry as ſun-ſhine. *We need not fear our worſt ſtate, if God will undertake to mend it: be not troubled with tying expectations of pain and weakneſſe, of diſeaſes and ſickneſſes in old age, God is able to make thee, notwithstanding the diſadvantages of nature, ſtrong and healthy. Old age will be youth to us at his word. Abraham was not troubled at an hundred years old, when God promiſed him, thou ſhalt have a ſonne. Saraahs dead womb was no impediment when God ſaid thou ſhalt conceive. Young men ſhall faint, and old men ſhall renew their ſtrength like the eagle, when God will have it ſo. The ſummer of your lives ſhall be a winter, and your winter a ſummer, your cloudy dayes ſhall be clearer than the noon, and your noon a cloud at his command, who made both ſummer and winter, ſun and cloud. He that put nature into order, can order things againſt nature.*

Thou ſhalt ſhine forth, thou ſhalt be as the morning.

This additionall claue heightens the ſenſe of the former. The word which we tranſlate, *to ſhine forth*, ſignifies alſo to *darken*. So Mr. Broughton renders, *Thy time ſhall paſſe the noon-day, obſcurenes ſhall match the morning*. And another thus, *If thou doeſt wax obſcure or dark, yet thou ſhalt match the morning*.

Our translators take Zophar continuing the metaphor of light; *Thine age ſhall be clearer than the noon-day*, and here he ſhews, that it ſhall not be a ſtanding, but an increaſing light, the light of the morning, *Thou ſhalt be as the noon in regard of the clearneſſe of thy light, and thou ſhalt be as the morning, in regard of the increaſe and continuance of thy light*: For though we have the greateſt light at noon, yet that light is neer a declenſion. The Sun being come to his height, is in its vertical point, and every hour after noon (though we cannot perceive it) grows darker and darker, till the ſhadows of the night wrap up all: but the morning Sun is a riſing Sun, which gains and gathers every moment. That's Solomons deſcription (Prov. 4. 18.) *The path of the righteous is as the*

Licet te ut vita fundum exſtumes novo natali velut aurora conſurges.

Equè illaſtrandi ac tenebreſcendi ſignificatam habet. Si obtenebreſcas eris tanquam mane.

Si ſubintelligitur.

morning light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. So then, these two are excellently joined together, to make up the highest expression of a prosperous estate; thy estate shall be so prosperous, in the degree of it, that it shall be *clearer than the noon-day*; and yet it shall be of such continuance, or rather of such increase, that it shall be *as the morning*; thou shalt be in a state of perfection yet receiving addition: though in a strict sense Philosophy defines that only perfect, to which nothing can be added, yet there is a kinde of perfection in receiving additions: *Jobs* state shall be so perfect, that it shall need no addition, and yet there shall be additions to its perfection, *It shall be a noon for perfection, it shall be a morning for addition and augmentation*, Thou shalt shine forth as the morning.

Hence Observe,

God is as able to continue his people in a high estate and to encrease it, as to raise them to it.

Thy light shall be as the noon, and thou shalt shine forth as the morning. If the Lord please, he can stop the declinings and decays even of temporalls, he can give us an everlasting noon in the things of this life, and he will certainly doe it in the life to come. He who causeth our Sun to ascend till it makes a noon, can command it to stand at noon, or ascend till it makes a clearer noon: As himself is *higher than the highest*, so he can make us higher, when we think our selves at the highest. As he makes darknesse of affliction darker to many who supposed it to be at the darkest, so he makes the light of joy lighter to many who supposed it to be at the lightest. Some whose state is darker then midnight, are yet as the evening encreasing in darknesse, and some whose age is clearer then the noon-day, are yet as the morning encreasing in light. Our evil dayes and our good dayes, our sorrows and our joyes, receive their limits from the hand of God. Our sorrows will every day be more sorrowfull unlesse God stop them, and our joyes will every day be more joyfull if God enlarge them.

Secondly, As the word signifies to obscure and darken, the sense appears thus, *Thou shalt be clearer than the noon, and if any* obscurity seize upon thee, yet thou shalt match the morning, thou shalt overcome that darknesse, and thy skie shall be clear again, the clouds shall break upon thee, day shall dawn, and comfort shall renew; *Thy obscurity shall be as the morning*, which disperseth darknesse, and conquers it by the approaching light. That

promise

*Consolation nun-
quam deerit in
omnibus adver-
sitatibus.*

promise (Isa. 58. 10.) is a clear exposition of this, *Then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darknesse be as the noon day*; that is, thy affliction shall be turned into consolation, and thy evil daies into good daies: The vulgar latin translates the former part of the verse thus, *Thou shalt be clear towards the evening, or, thy evening shall be clear*; the latter thus, *when thou thinkest thou art consumed, thou shalt be as Lucifer, or, as the morning star, even like that star which is the forerunner or messenger of the morning.*

Et quasi meridianus fulgor consurget tibi ad vesperam & cum te consumptum putaveris orieris ut Lucifer. Fulg.

Hence Observe,

That God can quickly turn all our sorrows into joy, and our worst times into pleasant times.

Thy obscurity shall match the morning. He can cause joy to rise out of sorrow, and turn our water into wine, our losses into gain; Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning, (Psal. 30. 5.) And again, *Unto the upright there ariseth light in darknesse*, (Psal. 112. 4.) As the Sun of wicked men sets at noon, so the light of the Saints riseth at midnight: *Amos 8. 9. I will cause the Sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day*; which text stands in as direct an opposition to this, as words can be pen'd. He who causeth the Sun to go down at noon, can command the Sun to rise at midnight; and he who darkens the earth in the clear day, lightens the earth in the darkest night. As natural, so civil and spiritual light and darknesse take their turns, and make their changes as God decrees. It is the happinesse of the Saints in misery, that their friend and father can say unto their misery, *Be gone*, and to happines *Return*. The state of the Jews was obliured by the rising of that fiery fatal Comet *Haman*; but anon *Mordecai* arose like a bright star in their Horizon, and then, *the Jews had light and gladnesse, and joy, and honour*, *Hest. 8. 16.*

Thirdly, Compare this verse with the counsel before given, *Zophar adviseth Job to seek unto God, and to humble himself before him*; what shall be the fruit of it? *Thine age shall be clearer than the noon-day; thou shalt shine forth, thou shalt be as the morning.*

Note from it.

When we are better, God usually makes our estates better.

Turn thou to God, and God will turn thy darknesse into light. The Prophet (Isa. 58. 10.) having described a fast, and taught the Jews how to humble themselves aright before God, subjoins

this promise, then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darknes be as the noon-day. When we depart out of the darknesse of sin, the Lord bids the darknesse of trouble to depart from us. While we cast our selves down, he raiseth us up, and sets us in the glory of our enjoyments. We complain we are in darknesse, but we forget that our sins stand in our light and hinder good things from us.

As promotion comes neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south, but from God, so the stop of promotion comes not from any of those quarters, but from our selves: if we were empty God would fill us, if poor God would enrich us, if low and abased he would exalt us. That advice of the Apostle James speaks all this; *Humble your selves in the sight of the Lord and he shall lift you up,* (Chap. 4 10.) As for those who being in darknesse, kindle a fire, and compasse themselves about with sparks, that they may walk in the light of their own fire, and in the sparks that they have kindled; This shall they have from the hand of the Lord, they shall lie down in sorrow (Isa. 50. 11.) A man continuing in sin, shall find himself as much disappointed in labouring to get out of darknesse into light by his own power, as in hoping that God will bring him out by his power.

Zophar goes on, and draws this general into particulars. There are five particular blessings laid down in the 18th and 19th verses, all which summed together make up the mercy of the 17th, viz. prosperity like the noon-day, and comforts like the morning.

The first is, *Thou shalt be secure because there is hope.*

Thou shalt be secure.

כח The word signifies an act not only of adherence but of assurance, not only of recumbency but of certainty: when the heart is fully settled and acquiesceth in the sufficiency and faithfullness of him who hath undertaken and stands up for our protection.

Non simplicem fidem sed certitudinem denotat est sine formidine acquiescere in sufficientia praesidii sui. There is a double security.

First, Sinful, accompanied with the neglect of good means, and with a presumption of a good end. Both are comprised in that rebuke given the false prophet (Jer. 28. 15.) *Thou makest this people trust (or secure) in a lie.*

Spes illa solum firmitatem habet quae deo nititur. Sanct. Secondly, There is a security which ariseth from the actings of a vigorous faith grounded upon the promise and word of God; That's the security for which Zophar engageth; That sense is clearly given in the words following, *Thou shalt be secure because*

because there is hope ; that is , because thou hast a sure word upon which to cast the anchor of thy hope. True hope is rooted in the promise , and fruited with peace. That's it which in this point we call security. When a lender hath the word of a good man for his money , he is said to have good security. How secure then may the Saints be , who have the word of the good God for their security ?

Thou shalt be secure because there is hope.

That is , Thou shalt not only have a present good estate , and store of blessings in possession , but abundance in expectation ; Hope is of good things to come ; An assurance of what we have not , is as good a settlement to the heart as what we have ; and he that can look for no more then he hath , can never have a settled heart. The hope of more is a richer inheritance then the inheriting of much. Were it not for hope the heart would break in evil times , and were it not for hope the heart would be unsatisfied in the best times. It is never well with us in this life till we can upon warrantable termes look beyond what we see. Vision will be enough for us in heaven , but on earth we cannot have a vision of any good thing which is enough. This makes the difference between the state of the Saints and of worldly men , We walk by faith , and not by sight ; They walk by sight and not by faith. Faith leads us into the Treasury of God , sight leaves them among the treasures of men. Our best estate lies in invisibles : Sence is of things present or seen , which are but temporal ; faith and hope are of things absent , and out of sight , which are eternal.

Further , These promissory words , *Thou shalt be secure because there is hope* , may referre ,

First , To the attaining of a good condition. Secondly , To the increasing or bettering of that good condition to which he should attain. Thirdly , To the keeping or maintaining of the good which should be so increased. Thou shalt have a morning , there's good attained , thy morning shall rise up to a noon-day , there's good increased , thy noon shall not decline , there's good maintained , and because of all these hopes , thou shalt be secure : and all these hopes must meet to make up a full security.

Hence Observe ,

Hope in God is the settlement and security of the soul.

There is a hope which is ill set , such a hope cannot settle us.

That

Spes est meliorum. Dru.

That hope which is right ſet is ſetling. Our hope is as the object is upon which we hope, if we hope upon that which is ſure, hope it ſelf is ſure, hope in God muſt needs be ſure, becauſe God is. So the Apoſtle argues: God willing more abundantly to ſhew unto the heirs of promiſe the immutability of his counſel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things in which it was impoſſible for God to lie, we might have ſtrong conſolation; who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope ſet before us, which hope we have as an anchor of the ſoul both ſure and ſtedfaſt, (Heb. 6. 17, 18, 19.) God is the Saints anchor-hold, they cannot be removed by any ſtorm, when once they have faſtened upon him. As every one that hath this hope purifieth himſelf even as God is pure: So every one that hath this hope may aſſure himſelf becauſe God is ſure. He is the hope of all the ends of the earth: and hope in him ſhall never end but in a full enjoyment of himſelf in heaven.

Obſerve, ſecondly,

That the condition of a godly man can never be deſperate.

Whatſoever he wants in the world he cannot want hope; he hath ſomewhat in hope, though he hath nothing in hand: He hath much in the promiſe though little in his purſe: He hath plenty of bread in the word, when he hath ſcarſe a loaf, or when he hath greateſt ſcarcity at his table. He may expect more of the world then he hath, though he hath much; and he may look upon all that is in the world, as his, though none of it be his. He hath a right to all, and he ſhall receive as much as he needs: If leſſe then all will not ſupport his needs, he ſhall have all; God will give every beleever a world by himſelf, rather then not give him as much as he hath promiſed. If the good things which God hath already made be not enough to make good every word which he hath ſpoken, he will ſpeak another word, which ſhall make more. As the heaven and the earth which are created ſhall paſſe rather then his word; ſo he will create a new heaven and a new earth, that all his words may ſtand.

There is a textual reading of theſe words, given by ſome, which reaches the ſenſe of this obſervation; *Be thou confident or ſecure while there is hope, So it is a counſel, not a promiſe, An exhortation, not a doctrinal aſſertion, or it is the uſe of the former doctrine, ſhewing us what becomes us to doe, when we hear what God hath ſpoken. When God makes us a promiſe, it is our duty to reſt upon him in it: Promiſes are the pillars of the ſoul.*

Chriſt

Christ is the substantial pillar of the soul, the promises are declarative pillars. As it is the priviledge of beleivers, that they may, so it is their duty, and they must rest upon those pillars. They are invited to close with every word of God, and embrace every offer which he makes. The word is spoken in vain, mercies are tendered in vain, except we act faith and pitch our hope upon them. Shall we be confident when men (*who are a lye and their breath is in their nostrils*) give us hopes they will stand our friends and help us; and shall we not when the great, the faithful and everliving God saith he will be our friend and helper!

There are three considerations which should make us hope whensoever God offers us a word.

First consider, what God hath done. *Experience works hope.* Look into your own experiences, and ask after the experiences of others. The report of both will be, *Thou Lord hast not forsaken them that seek thee.* (Psal. 9. 10) who would not seek him who hath never forsaken those that seek him?

Secondly consider, who it is that ingageth: It is God; A God all sufficient to make good his word, there is nothing too hard for him: and as not one iota or title of his commands, so not one of his promises shall fail, all shall be fulfilled. He gives promises and he can create performances. *The promise is good, but the promiser is better,* therefore be thou secure and trust when thou hast his promise.

Thirdly, Consider the relation which God beareth to his people. It is not an enemy, that speaks to ensnare and circumvent us, to mock and delude us; it is not a just man who speaks, who (though he mean well, and hath a minde to do what he speaks) yet may soon become unable: but it is God, in relation a friend to us, a father to us, one who speaks what he meaneth, and is able to doe what he speaks. It is God who is able, and who no accident can disable, he it is that speaks unto us. If God tell thee thy light shall be clearer then the noon, that thou shalt shine forth as the morning, be thou confident, act faith, yea let faith have a perfect work, then it hath, when we trust perfectly, Be secure because there is hope; That's the first priviledge promised, The second is this,

Yea thou shalt dig about thee.

Some expound this digging tropologically for the works of a *fodiendo*,
V
holy

דפח

Fodit hinc calpe

holy worship and obedience to God. These are a kinde of digging in Gods earth.

Others, *Thou shalt dig*, That is, thou shalt provide thy grave. As if he had said, *I promise the favour, not only while thou livest, but when thou art dead*, thou shalt have a comely buriall, and be laid in thy sepulcher with honour. The words which follow, [*Thou shalt take thy rest in safety*] are interpreted to fill up his sense, *Thou shalt be laid in thy grave, and when thou art there none shall violate thy ashes, or disquiet thy dust*. It is threatned as a sore curse (*Jer. 8. 1.*) that the bones of the deceased Kings and Princes, &c. should be pull'd out of their graves, and should be spread before the Sun and Moon and all the host of heaven, whom they had loved. Now here (say they) Job is assured, that none shall stir his bones, or pillage his tombe, when he should sleep with his fathers in the grave. But I passe it.

Thirdly, *Thou shalt dig about thee*, that is, thou shalt draw a line of defence or a trench about thee; So Mr. Broughton, *Thou shalt entrench, and lye down safely*. The moles safety (who is named from this word in the Hebrew) is in earthing himself; and so is the safety of men in warre. Thus it is an expresseion of greatest safety, thou shalt be as safe as if thou wert fortified with walls and trenches, or hadst planted bulworks round about thee.

Fourthly, Others think that Zophar alludes to the fashion of those times; Either first, In their removings, when taking up their tents, and intending to pitch them in a new place, they digged to let in the stakes and fasten them; *To, to dig*, is no more but this, thou shalt pitch thy tent, or set up thy tabernacle and be in safety: God can protect thee in a tent as well as in a castle. We call the furniture of our houses, our moveables, but they had moveable houses. Or secondly, That he alludes to their digging of wells, which was in those ages and places a noted businesse, as we may reade in *Genesis*. So, *Thou shalt dig*, is, thou shalt make provision for thy flocks and cattel (water being one part is put for all) and none shall contend with thee, as the herdsmen of *Isaac* and of *Gerar* did, *Gen. 26. 20.*

Fifthly, I rather conceive *digging* is put either strictly for tilling and manuring the earth, or, more largely, for the labour of any calling; *Thou shalt dig about thee*, that is, thou shalt follow thy businesse in the place where providence hath cast thee; digging

*Ad sepulcrum
pertinet, q. d.
sepultus jacebis
securus. Aquin.*

*Facebis secu-
rus velut fossa
circumducta.
Tyg. Securus
ages ac si vallo
& fossa muni-
tus. Vatab.*

*Puto alludi ad
morem Arabum
qui subinde ta-
bernacula sua
& sedes move-
bant. Merc.*

*Todiendi ope-
ram ad rem a-
grariam refert
Cajetanus.*

ging is put for the whole service of his life, *Luk. 16. 3.*) the unjust steward when he feared to be called to an account, queries with himself, *What shall I doe? for my Lord taketh away my stewardship; I cannot dig*, that is, I know not how to put my self to any labour, or calling, especially to a calling of hard labour, and I am ashamed to beg, what will become of me? But what privilege is there in this that *he should dig*? I answer first, **It is a mercy to have a calling.** But secondly, When it is said *Thou shalt dig*, he means two things further. First, thou shalt thrive and prosper in thy calling; Thou shalt gain by digging. Secondly, Thou shalt be safe in thy calling, *thou shalt dig without fear or danger*, without let or hinderance. When *Jobs* estate was surprized, his servants were some plowing, other keeping sheep, all at work. Now it is promised that he and his shall dig in quietness. To clear which sense, we may connect the later clause of the verse (which I have proposed and shall open as a third distinct privilege) with this. *Thou shalt dig about thee, and thou shalt rest in safety*; That is, in labour thou shalt have rest, or, the rest of safety shall be thy portion, in all the motions of thy labour.

Hence Observe,

It is a great blessing when we freely enjoy the exercise of our callings.

It is our duty to have a calling, and it is a mercy to go on profitably and peaceably in it.

There are some (though I cannot much approve the interpretation) who expound that (*Cant. 7. 1.*) where Christ speaks to the Church, *How beautiful are thy feet with shoes?* to this sense, thy feet are beautiful in thy calling; when a man hath his shoes on, he is fit for business, and his feet are never so beautiful as when he is at honest business; As the Saints have a spiritual and heavenly calling, in which they deal with Christ and trade towards heaven: So Christ will have them employed in earthly callings and maintain dealings with men; one calling honours and supports the other; our general calling gets a blessing upon the special, and in our special callings we have occasion to shew forth our virtues and graces, and so to honour our general calling: It is a high commendation when we can say to a Christian, *How beautiful are thy feet with shoes?* that is, thou art holy when thou art about worldly things, as well as when thou art about

ſpiritual things; This is a truth, and may be a good alluſion, though not a proper expoſition of that Scripture: Now as our feet are beautiful with ſhoes, when we go on juſtly, and righteouſly, ſo when we go on thrivingly, quietly and peaceably in our callings; when though we have much labour, yet we have no ſorrow in our callings: when though we work hard for the bread we eat, yet we get bread to eat, and others do not eat the bread for which we have wrought.

And thou ſhalt take thy reſt in ſafety,

שכב That's a third privilege. The word ſignifies a lying down, whether in the day time for a ſhort reſhement, or in the night for ſleep. And ſo it is no more but this, As thou ſhalt dig, and thrive at thy work, ſo thou ſhalt take thy reſt in ſafety, thy reſpoſes in the day, and thy ſleep in the night ſhall be ſweet unto thee. *Iſhbosheth* was ſlain at noon upon his bed, the night hath been fatal to many.

שכב
Cubare, cubat
qui non dor-
mit: hoc ver-
bum de morte
uſurpatur hinc
mortui. Druf.

ἡσυχάζεις ἡσυχία
ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ ὁ πνεύματι
λαμβάνει. Sept

Sept

Note from it,

It is a mercy to enjoy reſt with quiet.

They who are continually hurried with fears, who (like *Job*) have had their eſtates plundered and ſpoiled, would count it ſo. How many thouſands, lately, in this kingdom, have as it was threatned (*Deut. 28. 66.*) been in fear day and night, who when they have lain down could not reſt an hour in ſafety? The Scripture gives us many promiſes about this bleſſing, *Prov. 3. 24.* When thou lyeſt down, thou ſhalt not be afraid, yea, thou ſhalt lye down, and thy ſleep ſhall be ſweet, *Pſal. 127. 2.* So he giveth his beloved ſleep. *Pſal. 3. 5.* I laid me down and ſlept, I awaked, for the Lord ſuſtained me. *Pſal. 4. 8.* I will both lay me down in peace and ſleep, for thou Lord makeſt me dwell in ſafety. When the Lord undertakes our protection we may ſleep on both ears, that is, ſecurely and comfortably; when he watcheth over us we ſhall reſt, though thouſands watch againſt us. A good nights reſt is the good gift of God, and deſerves dayly acknowledgements by man.

The fourth privilege follows.

Verſe 19. *Thou ſhalt lie down and none ſhall make thee afraid.*

Some enterprete this as a repetition, or but as an addition to the former; but we may thus difference them; That promiſed reſt to his perſon and family, this to his eſtate and cattel. The word

word (*Rabats*) here used, properly signifies the lying down of כָּבַד cattell in their fields and folds. Thus understood, it is a distinct *Proprie de græ-* mercy, Thou shalt be quiet in thy bed, as also thy cattell, thy sheep *gibus.* and oxen, shall all lye down quietly in their stals and pastures, none shall stir them up, much lesse take them away. But some may object. The text doth not say, Thy cattell, &c. shall lie down, But thou shalt lie down. I answer, A man and his estate, whether in things living or without life, may be wrapt up in one, we are well and in peace (according to common speech) when ours and all that we have are well.

Hence Note,

A peaceable condition, even for our goods and cattell, is a remarkable favour.

That our estates are quiet as well as our persons, that our beasts can lie down safely as well as our children, is to be numbred among our mercies. The Psalmist prayeth hard for it (*Psal.* 144. 13, 14.) *That our sheep may bring forth thousands, and ten thousands in our streets, That our oxen may be strong to labour, that there be not breaking in, nor going out, that there be no complaining in our streets:* and least any should judge these but small matters, he casts them up into a great summe, even the summe of all our desires, *Happinesse, Happy is that people that is in such a case.* Though neither all our happinesse nor our chief happinesse consisteth in these outward things; yet such an enjoyment of these things is a happines.

There is a fifth priviledge greater then any of these, and yet but an outward priviledge; This makes the sun of his promised prosperity as the noon-day in his highest *zenith* of perfection.

Yea many shall make sute unto thee.

The Hebrew is, *they shall intreat thy face.* And the word which we translate *entreat*, signifies also *to weary, or tire one out, to be* פָּנָה *pained either in minde or body;* and when it is joined, — as here, with the word *face*, or *countenance*, it signifies to weary one with prayer and intreaty, that is, to use many intreaties, so many — *prece quâ* intreaties as weary a man to hear them. That parable which *fatigent virgines sanctæ minis audientem* teacheth that men ought alwayes to pray and not to faint, represents us with a judge which feared not God, nor regarded men, and with an importunate widow, who came unto him saying, *stam. Horat.* *Avenge me of mine adversary, and he would not for a while; But* l. 1. Od. 2.

ה' פ

*Deluit corpore
vel animo, &
cum nomine*

פָּנָה

*Facies, vultus,
est fatigare aliquem precibus.*

fatigent virgines sanctæ minis audientem

stam. Horat.

afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God nor regard man, yet because this widow troubleth me I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me, (Luk. 18. 5. *As many are weary of prayer, so some are wearied with prayers*, and grant the petitions of the poor, not to releeve them, but to ease themselves. So the meaning is this, *They shall make many suites to thee*, even as many as are made to him that is wearied with suitors; though it be a great honour to have suitors, yet there is a burthen in it too; The faces of Kings and Magistrates are wearied with hearing supplications.

Others understand *face* here (as it is often taken in the Hebrew) for anger and displeasure, and give the elegancy of it thus, *Many shall abate, or weary thine anger*; when they hear that thou art angry or displeased with them, they shall make so many suites and petitions to thee, as shall take off thine anger and bring it down. It is hard to be angry with those that are humbled; when God is angry, we may be said to weary his anger by prayer, or to cause him to give over being angry. The Church wonders when the anger of God outstood so many prayers. *O Lord God of hosts how long wilt thou be angry against the prayers of thy people?* (Psal. 80. 4.) The anger of God can hold out as long as his love, but God will appear weary of his anger, when we are not weary of praying to him. We weary the anger of God and make it faint with supplications, when we supplicate him earnestly and humbly without wearinesse and fainting. As sin and unbelief are said to weary the patience of God, (Isa. 7. 13. c. 43. 24.) So prayer and faith (or the prayer of faith) are said to weary the wrath of God. In this sense the word is frequently used, (Psa. 119. 58.) *I intreated thy favour (or wearied thy face) with my whole heart.* Saul speaks in the same form of words (1 Sam. 13. 12.) *I said the Philistines will come down now upon me in Gilgal; and I have not made supplication unto (or wearied the face of) God.* So then the blessing here promised Job, is, that many (as subjects to Princes, and tenants to their Lords, yea as man to God) should make their suite and do homage to him. As if Zophar had said, *Many now despise and undervalue thee because of thine affliction, and heretofore many came boldly to disquiet thy person and spoil thy substance; but the case shall be so altered with thee, that they who before despised thee, shall honour and reverence thee, (As many of them who mocked Christ, shortly after adored him,) they that heretofore*

*Te suspicient
& colent, tibi
supplices erunt
propter divitias
& dignitatem.
Druf.*

fore terrified thee shall be afraid of thee, and shall humble themselves before thee. They shall fear thy power, and beg thy favour, with renewed supplications, till it shall be a weariness to hear them. Thou shalt be more able to destroy them then deny them. Only take my advice, and hearken to my counsel. *Be thou earnest in seeking unto God,* and others shall quickly seek unto thee; doe thou make sute to him, and weary his face, and thou shalt see many will come and weary thy face with sutes; Thy very enemies and unkindest friends will be glad not only of thy company, but of a good word or a good look from thee. And in this Zophar spake truer, in reference unto himself and his friends, then he was a ware of; For as others, so these three, by the command of God (chap. 42.) were glad to come and intreat the face of Job, that he would entreat the face of God for them.

Hence Observe,

First, *It is an honour to have others sue or seek to us.*

In this God gives us a share, and makes us partakers with himself in one of his greatest honours; It is the honour of God that all creatures sue to him and depend upon him, that all need his help and that so many petition him for it every day. *He is the God hearing prayer, therefore to him shall all flesh come.* The highest glory which God hath on earth, is, that so many thousands come thronging to and knocking at the gate of heaven with tears and prayers. One reason why Princes and Magistrates are called gods, is because such as are oppressed or in want make supplication unto them, *Prov. 19. 6. Many will intreat the favour of the Prince;* It is the subjects duty to do it, and the doing of it is the Princes honour: *Flatterers are the disgrace of Princes, but suitors are a grace unto them.* That civil power is drawn down to the lees, or is at the lowest ebbe, which no man or but few sue unto. And the lowest ebbe both of Zions spiritual power and outward splendour is thus exprest *Jer. 30. 17. Thus is Zion whom no man seeketh after.* Zion was once sought unto, for thither the Tribes went up, they went up thither to worship the Lord: and when the glory of Zion should be restored, the Prophet assures her *Isa. 60. 14. The sons of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto, and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; And they shall call thee the city of the Lord, the Zion of the holy one of Israel. Isa. 45. 14. The labour of Egypt, and merchandise of Ethiopia, &c. they shall come over, and they shall fall*

fall down unto thee; they shall make supplication unto thee, saying, Surely God is in thee, and there is none else, there is no God. To make supplication to any one, either supposeth him to be a God, or that much of God is in him. (Psal. 45. 12.) The rich among the people shall intreat thy favour (it is the word in the text) not only poor mean underlings, but the worldly rich among the people shall seek thy heavenly riches, the honourable shall think it an honour to join in communion with thee. The Philadelphian Angel is promised this high priviledge, Rev. 3. 9. Behold I will make them of the Synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but doe lie, behold I will make them come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee, that is, I will make them submit and sue unto thee as unto my speciall favourite. The glory of Christ himself is thus described (Isa. 11. 10.) There shall be a root of Jesse, and to him shall the Gentils seek. To seek or make suit to a man, speaks reverence to and worth in his person, It speaks ability to help, and supposeth willingnesse; it speaks a fear of having that power used against us, and an earnest desire of having it improved for us; honour comes in from all quarters to those who have many suitors.

Secondly, To whom, and upon what termes doth Zophar make this promise? He makes it unto Job, and to him in case he should seek unto God and humble himself before him.

Observe,

Holinesse towards God, makes us honourable and venerable among men.

*Omnes quodomo-
modo mali esse
coguntur ne vi-
les habeantur.
Sal. lib. 4. ad
Eccl. Cathol.*

I grant some are therefore despised because they are holy, and not a few continue in or turn to unholinesse lest they should be despised. Holinesse which is the beauty of men and Angels, yea of God himself, is accounted a blot among unholy ones; yet all they who are truly are holy honourable in themselves, and they are honourable in the eyes and esteem of many others. Though they are thought unworthy to live in the world, yet the world is not worthy of them, Heb. 11. 38. *There is more worth in the least grace then in all earthly glory.* Them that honour me (saith God, 1 Sam. 2. 30.) I will honour, and they that despise me, shall be lightly esteemed. *God is the fountain of honour, and yet he receives honour.* We give much honour unto God when we sincerely seek unto him and obey him; they that honour God thus, shall have a like honour, others shall seek to them and obey them.

Since

Since thou waſt precious in my ſight thou haſt been honourable Iſa. 43. 4. All are ready to honour thoſe who are precious in the eyes of earthly Kings, and ſue for the favour of their favourites. This in a proportion is true of every one that is precious in the eyes of God, he ſhall be honoured, ſometimes in the eyes of worldly men, but always in the eyes of men fearing God. There is a ſpiritual excellency ſtampt upon the face of the meanest ſervant of God: they that are ſpiritual ſee and reverence it. The citizen of *Zion* is deſcribed among other qualifications by this alſo, he is a man, *in whoſe eyes a vile perſon is contemned, but he honoureth them that fear the Lord.* As grace is honourable, ſo it is a ſign of grace to honour thoſe who are gracious.

Theſe are the promiſes made by *Zophar* to encourage *Job*, both in general, *ver. 17.* and in particulars, *ver. 18,* and *19.* In the 20th he draws up the concluſion of his ſpeech, ſetting down the contrary eſtate and condition of wicked men, and by conſequence the eſtate of *Job* if he ſhould continue (as he ſuppoſed him) wicked. While he ſpoke of mercy, he ſpoke in the ſecond perſon, here he ſpeaks of judgement in the third.

Verſe 20. *But the eyes of the wicked ſhall fail, and they ſhall not eſcape, and their hope ſhall be as the giving up of the ghoſt.*

As if *Zophar* had ſaid, *If thou doeſt perſiſt in thy ſin, thou maiest look for good till thy eyes ake, and never be bleſſed with the ſight of it; or thy condition ſhall grow yet more ſad, ſo ſad, that thy eyes ſhall be pained to ſee it, and thou ſhalt have no hope to eſcape it, or if thou haſt, it ſhall be a dying hope, even like the giving up of the ghoſt.*

Here are three branches of this deſcription concerning the opposite condition of wicked men.

Fiſt, *Their eyes ſhall fail,* in looking for good.

Secondly, *They ſhall not eſcape,* preſent evil, if they hope they ſhall, Then

Thirdly, *Their hope ſhall be as the giving up of the ghoſt.*

The eyes of the wicked ſhall fail.

The failing of the eyes may be conſidered two waies. There is fiſt a natural failing of the eyes through age, as alſo through extremity of want and affliction (which is an accident unto nature) The eyes of the wild aſſes are ſaid to fail *becauſe there was*

*Hebraismus est
qua extrema
describitur vi-
rium exte-
nuatio atque
defectus ad
mortem usque
Bold.*

no grasse, Jer. 14. 6. God threatens the *Jews* with such troubles as should consume their eyes, Levit. 26. 16. When *Jonathan* 1 Sam. 14. 29. wanted food, his eyes were dim, and as soon as he had tasted a little honey, *see I pray you* (saith he) *how mine eyes have been enlightned because I tasted a little of this honey*. Neither of these ways are we to understand it here. Secondly, There is a failing of the eyes in a moral sence: Though the optick vertue of the eye be like that of *Moses*, which was as strong and clear at a hundred and twenty years old, as at twenty, yet when a man is disappointed of the thing which he looks for, his eyes are said to fail. The failing of our eyes is the disappointment of our hopes. And the reason of that expression is, because the eye is the instrument, by which we look up, or look out for that, which is the desire, and would be (as we conceive) the satisfaction of our souls. Yet further, the eyes may be said to fail two ways.

*Dum expectant
bonum & non
assequuntur.
Sic consumptio
oculorum su-
mitur in Scrip-
tura. Rab. Sol.*

First, (As before) When we obtain not what we have long expected: So the captive *Jews* complain Lam. 4. 17. *As for us, our eyes as yet failed for our vain help: in our watching we have waited for a nation that could not save us. Job* in vindication of his integrity professeth, *that he never caused the eyes of the widdow to fail* Chap. 31. 16.) that is, he neither made them stay over long for an answer, nor did he chide them away presently with a bad one. For,

*Videndo & in-
videndo lan-
guescent. Invi-
dia est oculo-
rum dolor.*

Secondly, This failing of the eyes doth arise from the sight of that which we would not see, as well as from the not seeing of what we would. *To meet with that which we look not for, is as troublesome as not to meet with that for which we look*. And as want of that good which we would enjoy, so envy at the good which another enjoyes is a pain unto the eyes. Envy is the worst disease of the eye: when a man seeth another flourish in prosperity and in peace, whom he hates, that monster envy tortures him, and his eyes begin to ake.

In both or either of these senses we may understand it here.

First thus, Wicked men shall look long enough for any good before it comes, their eyes shall fall out of their heads with looking for good because it comes not.

*De Jobi e-
mulatoribus &
invidis hac ar-
bitor intelligen-
da. Bold.*

Secondly, *Their eyes shall fail*, that is, they shall see the righteous in such prosperity, and raised up to such lustre and glory, that they shall not be able to bear it. This some give as the peculiar intent of the place. For though the assertion be applicable

to all wicked men, yet it seems to aim chiefly at those who insulted over *Job* in his affliction. These mens eyes, saith *Zophar*, shall be dazled and sink in their heads, at the splendour of that restitution which God will make in thy estate, if thou wilt but return to God and repent. *They who mocked thy fall, shall be amazed at thy rising.*

This first clause taken in connection with the counsel before given, yeelds us this Observation.

The prayers of the Saints draw down good upon themselves, and trouble upon their adversaries.

Prayer is an offensive weapon as a well as defensive: as it protects us from evil and attaineth good for us, so it wounds our enemies and obstructs the passages of their good. What hinders the desires of wicked men and breaks their projects? what stops the course of their counsels? Some poor soul, perhaps many are praying against them, and then, the eyes of the wicked shall fail, they shall never partake of their expectations. There is a destroying power in the prayers of the Saints, as well as a saving and a helping power. The witnesses have a flame at their lips, fire proceedeth out of their mouthes which devoureth their enemies (*Rev. 11.*) which most interpret to be their prayers: they pray their enemies to destruction, they pray them into disappointments; their enemies lay designs, and prayer dismounteth their designs, or turns their Artillery against their own breasts.

Secondly, Take the interpretations given of these words in their own compasse. Then

Observe first:

It is a vexation to wicked men, a very pain to their eyes, to see the prosperity of godly men.

A good man is an eye-fore to those that are evil. *Haman* was in an high estate, a great man and full of honour, yet *Mordecai* was an eye-fore to him; *Hamans* eyes failed when he saw him, and therefore after he had made report to his friends and to his wife, of the glory of his riches, and the multitude of his children, and all the things wherein the King had promoted him, &c. he melts into this sad and discontented conclusion, yet all this availeth me nothing, so long as I see *Mordecai* the Jew sitting at the Kings gate, *Elth. 5. 13.* All the pictures in the Kings gallery, did not please and feed the eye of *Haman* so much as the sight of *Mordecai*

decai ſitting at the Kings gate vexed him.

Secondly Obſerve,

Wicked men ſhall never obtain the good things they long for and gape after.

Their hopes ſhall be fruitleſſe, their projects ſucceſſes, their labour ſhall be labour in vain. The beſt are ſometimes put to it very hard, their refuge and their hopes fail them long, though not for ever, *Pſal. 69. 3. Mine eyes fail while I wait for my God.* David waited ſo long that he was even weary with waiting, yet God came at laſt. The ſtubborn Jews are threatned, *Deut. 28. 32. Thy Sons and thy Daughters ſhall be given to another people, and thine eyes ſhall look and fail with longing for them all the day long.* Siſera's Mother and her wiſe Ladies looked long through the lattice for his coming, but he came not at all. The eyes of the wicked ſhall fail indeed, they ſhall fail with waiting upon their idols and vanities, upon their luſts and lies, upon their relations and friends, upon their policies and plottings: It ſhould make the Saints to lift up their heads and their eyes with confidence, that God will cauſe the eyes of wicked men to fail.

And they ſhall not eſcape.

מְנוּס אֲבָר
מִנֶּהֱמָם

*Effugium per-
bit ab iis.*

As they ſhall not receive the good which they expect, ſo they ſhall not be able to deliver themſelves from the evil which they fear. *They ſhall not eſcap;* the Hebrew is, *their refuge ſhall fail them;* Mr. Broughton, *Their refuge ſhall be forlorn.* You may take it either in reference to their eſcaping the hand of men, or to their eſcaping the hand of God. They ſhall not eſcape the hand of men, their refuge ſhall fail them there. When once Saul was forſaken of God, he could not eſcape the hand of the Philiftins, ſee *1 Sam. 28.* what means he made to eſcape them, whom he had often conquered, he goes to the devil for help, but he could not eſcape, *Nothing ſhall doe them good who are forſaken of God.* And if they cannot eſcape the hands of men, much leſſe ſhall they be able to eſcape the hand of God. As his hand is not ſhortned to ſave, ſo not to puniſh. Where he reſolves to ſtrike, he can. *They ſhall not eſcape.* This intimates two things.

1. The falſeneſſe of thoſe props and ſupports, whether perſons or things, upon which they leaned; *I (ſaith David, Pſal. 142. 4.) looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that*

that would know me, refuge failed me: The help of man often fails *good men*, though the help of God never fails them. The help of man often fails wicked men, and the help of God fails them ever. They may look in a ſtreight not only on the right hand and on the left, that is, on all creatures, but upward alſo, on God himſelf, and yet find no refuge. God will not deliver wicked men, and others ſhall not. Nothing can ſave him whom God will deſtroy, or give up to deſtruction.

2. The vanity of their own hopes, they have great hopes that they ſhall get off and out-run their dangers, but they cannot. Their ſorrows ſhall be too ſwift of foot for them, yea their ſorrows ſhall purſue them as upon eagles wings. *They ſhall not eſcape.*

Hence Obſerve,

There is no eſcaping the hand of God.

His is a long hand, every thing is within the reach of it. His foot is a ſwift foot, therefore *the flight ſhall periſh from the ſwift, and the ſtrong ſhall not ſtrengthen his force, neither ſhall the mighty deliver himſelf, neither ſhall he ſtand that handleth the bowe, and he that is ſwift of foot ſhall not deliver himſelf,* Amos 2.14. When a prevailing enemy comes, there's no fighting with him, but there may be an eſcape from him. *A good pair of heels may doe us ſervice where hands cannot.* But when a people can neither fight nor flee, neither charge nor retreat, their caſe is deſperate. There is no getting from that vengeance which God ſendeth to attach and apprehend his enemies. As all outward helps ſhall fail thoſe whom God will not help, ſo God rejects the confidences which wicked men have in him. On that ſuppoſition *Rabshakeh* thought to daſh the confidence of *Hezekiah*, and to perſwade him that he ſhould not eſcape. *Is not this he in whom thou truſteſt* (ſaith he) *whoſe high places and whoſe altars thou haſt taken away?* Thou truſteſt in God, but will God deliver thee when thou haſt thus diſhonoured him? *They that deſtroy the inſtituted worſhip of God, have little reaſon to hope that God ſhould aſſiſt them, while they offer to truſt him, which is his natural worſhip.* Seeing then God rejects the confidences which wicked men have in him, and blaſteth every outward thing which they make their confidence, how is it poſſible for them to eſcape? When our rock will not ſave us, how ſhall we be ſaved by a ſtaff of reed?

The

The third branch of the text wrings the very dregs of the wrath of God, into the cup of ungodly men.

Spes eorum.

שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ

Their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost.

When hope dies all dies: hope is the last commodity which a man puts off in this life; but what is their hope worth which is as dead.

Proprie hac phrasi significatur deliquium animæ.

Est spes illorum abominatio animæ.
Vulg.

Vox Nepheſh hoc loco pro ha-litu & vento ſumitur. Bold.

Res ſperate dignæ ſunt quæ exhiben-tur exufflen-tur quas ſtatu repellat longe-que projiciat.

There is much variety in interpreting this expreſſion. The word properly taken ſignifies *ſwooning*, or failing of the ſpirits. The giving up of the ghost, is the total and final failing of the ſpirits. He can have but few ſpirits left alive, whoſe hope hath given up the ghost. Mr. Broughton renders, *Their hope is nought but pangs of the ſoul*: the Vulgar, *their hope ſhall be the abomination of their ſoul*: The ſenſe of which tranſlation ſeems to be this; That which wicked men receive in lieu of, or in answer to their great hopes, ſhall be an abomination to them; they hope for good, but evil cometh. And every evil is then moſt grievous, when it ſucceeds the hope of good. Hope may be ſaid to give up the ghost, when either the good we would obtain removes further from us, or the evil we would decline comes cloſer to us: Hope expires when we are preſented with viſions of fear and ſorrow, after our higheſt expectations of joy and comfort: hence ſome tranſlate the word (*Nepheſh*) *a breath or puff of winde*, to which the hope of the wicked is elegantly compared, becauſe it quickly vaniſheth and produceth no effect, or not the effect hoped for. That complaint in the Prophet ſutes this notion fully, (*Iſa 26. 18.*) *We have been with childe* (bigge with hopes) *we have been in pain*, (endured much to enjoy our hopes and bring them to the birth, but in ſtead of them) *we have as it were brought forth winde*, *we have not wrought any deliverance in the earth*. After long looking, and long labour, all proved but a gripe of winde or a collick fit.

Again, ſay others, *Their hope ſhall be as the ſnuffing of the breath*, that is, they ſhall be ſo angry at their diſappointments, that they ſhall vex & ſnuff at it. Or thus, The things which they ſhall receive upon all their hopes placed in & credit given to the creature, ſhall not be worth *a ſnuff of breath*; that is, they ſhall be light and vain: So ſome expound that (*Mal. 1. 13.*) where the Prophet brings in that people toyling under the preſſures of (that which ſhould have been their delight) the publike worſhip; *ye have ſaid, Behold what*

What a wearineſſe is it, and ye have ſnuffed at it; (it is this word) they cried out, we have brought many weighty offerings and ſacrifice, and what a burthen is it to do ſo? and ye ſnuffed at it, that is, ye thought much of it, or were vexed at it, ſo we tranſlate: But the letter of the original is read thus, ye have ſaid, Behold what a wearineſſe is it, where as you might have blown it away, or blown it off; as if he had ſaid, you think you have done a great matter, and ſpeak as if ye were all in a ſweat at my ſervice, whereas indeed you have done little for me, and what you did, you ſpoiled it in the doing, you have done it in an ill manner; you have brought me a poor, a lame and a halting ſacrifice, ſuch as a man might even blow away with his breath, and your own hearts have been more halting, lame and light then your ſacrifice. So here, their hope ſhall be as a thing blown or puffed away with a breath, there ſhall be no ſtability, no ſubſiſtence in it.

The words (according to our reading) teach us, that the hopes of wicked men are decaying and dying hopes. *Giving Spes eorum up the gholt* is the laſt act of life, and the beginning of death. *perditio Sept.* As all the hopes of wicked men periſh when they die, ſo while *fui ſc. rerum-* they live their hopes are dying. A godly man hath not only a *que ſuarum* living but a lively hope, (1 Pet. 1. 3.) A wicked man hath but *vel quod de ip-* a dying hope at beſt, and his hope ſhall be worſe and worſe every *ſis inapiis ſpera-* day till it be utterly deſperate. The Prophet *Iſaiah* deſcribeth the *ri poteſt ani-* judgements of God upon his antient people by pulling off the *ma perditio eſt* bark of a tree, (chap. 1. 7.) *He hath laid my vine waſt, and barked my figt-ree; He hath made it clean bare, the branches of it are white.* The Chaldee paraphraſt głoſſes it by the expreſſion of this text, *He hath cauſed my figt-ree to give up the gholt*; hence the meaning is plain, that, look as a tree (take it for a figt-ree, or any other tree) when you pull off the bark, bears no more fruit, but dies, ſo ſhall the hope of a wicked man be: We may ſay of ſuch a mans hope as Chriſt of the figt-ree which he curſed, *neven fruit grow on thee more*, thou art a dying tree, thou haſt done thy worſt, thou haſt ſeen thy beſt daies, now thy bark is peeled off, thy boughes are bare, thy hope is as the giving up of the *Spes eorum eſt ſtatio animæ* gholt. *i.e. tanto dolore*

Laſtly, The Hebrew, having no particle of ſimilitude, runs thus in the letter, *Their hope ſhall be the giving up of the gholt*, that is, *A wicked man is often brought into ſuch a condition that he hath no hope but this, that his day is almoſt done, and himſelf a neer neigh-* *afficientur ex-* *cidentur ſua* *ſpe ut ſibi mor-* *tem conſci-* *cant.*

bour unto death : He hath no hope when he dies , yet all his hope is to die ; and that's a miserable hope. *Jonahs* hope (under temptation) was the giving up of the ghost , therefore he praies hard that God would take him out of the world. *Achitophels* hope was his death , he being crossed in his wicked counsel went and hanged himself. They who are past all positive hope in this life , retire (as their last reserve) to this privative hope , O that they were dead *Not to be , is their hope who are overpressed with fears of being miserable.* Despair of all good while we live , makes evil (such is death) the best of our hopes.

The summe of all is , *A wicked man is a miserable man.* Put the three parts of this verse together , and you may read the worst of misery. *He that never receives the good he hopes for , and sees others receive that good which he grieves for : He that cannot escape any danger which he fears , nor meet with any deliverance which he desires : He whose hopes are dying , or who hath no hope but to dye , he that is all this , is any thing but happy , and wants nothing but hell (at the very brink whereof he is , when he is all this) to make him compleatly miserable.*

The Prophet *Malachi* gives us the opinion of those times concerning wicked men , *You call the proud happy , and they that work wickednesse are set up ;* but he tells of a time when they should return and discern between the righteous and the wicked ; There is the greatest real difference already between the righteous and the wicked , but God will make a legible difference , a difference so plain and legible , that you shall not need to call in the help of faith (which hath the most exquisite eye) to read it , sense may do it. The oldest eyes , even the eyes of the old man shall discern between the righteous and the wicked , between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not , when the one shall be burnt up root and branch in the fire and flames of justice , and the other refreshed with the healing beams of the Son of righteousness. Wayt but a while and you shall see God drawing out these positions in providences towards his people , and making a visible comment upon this text of Scripture. The light of the righteous shall not fail , but the eyes of the wicked shall ; The one shall be secure because there is hope , but the other hath no hope to escape , or the hope he hath shall be as the giving up of the ghost.

JOB Chap. 12. vers. 1, 2, 3, 4.

*And Job answered, and said,
No doubt but ye are the people, and wisdom shall die with you.
But I have understanding as well as you, I am not inferiour to
you: yea, who knoweth not such things as these?
I am as one mocked of his neighbour, who calleth upon God,
and he answereth him: the just upright man is laughed
to scorn.*

THis and the two following Chapters, contain *Jobs* answer to the counsel and objections of his third friend, *Zophar*, not excluding what had been said by the two former. There are four things most remarkable in it.

First, *Job* sharply rebukes that pride of spirit, and confidence of their own opinion which he observed in his friends. He pursues this point from the beginning of the Chapter to the end of the fourth verse. *No doubt but ye are the people, &c.*

Secondly, He refutes that opinion which they three had maintained against him; namely, that good or evil things distinguish good and evil men; himself shewing by many arguments taken from the various administrations of God, that outward evils are often the lot of good men, and that outward good is often the lot of evil men in this life. This Theam begins at the fifth verse, and is enlarged to the end of the Chapter.

Thirdly, He rejects his friends, as *Physicians of no value*, yea, as having wronged God whilst they seemed to be advocates for him. This he prosecutes with much variety from the beginning of the thirteenth Chapter to the seventeenth verse.

Fourthly, He renews his former plea with God, putting many requests to him, and strongly arguing for a release from, or at least a lessening and mitigation of his troubles.

The whole discourse is somewhat more pressing and sharp,

then either of the former ; *Job's* stile tastes much of the gall and vinegar of his sorrows in this reply : and there was some reason it should : for seeing his friends still undervaluing the defence he had made, and charging him afresh with that old leaven of hypocrisie (as if there were no way to assert the justice and holiness of God, but by condemning him for unjust and unholy) he could not take it well at their hands, but grows somewhat warm in language towards them ; we shall be sensible of it, in opening the body of his answer.

Then Job answered and said.

He seems to assert rather than to dispute, and is larger in laying down his own positions, then in answering the objections of his friends. Yet indeed a clear assertion of truth is a sufficient confutation of error ; and a clear stating of a question is the real answer of all objections.

No doubt but ye are the people.

The word is usually translated, *the multitude* ; and it comes from a root which signifies to cover or hide, because a multitude, *Operuit, texit,* or a great croud of people, hide and cover the face of the earth.

quoniam multitudo terram tegit.

No doubt but ye are the people : The text is taken two waies : Some read it as a plain assertion, others, as an irony, which is a speech filled with derision : while the letter of it makes no doubt, the spirit of it is an absolute denial.

They who take it as a plain assertion, read thus ; *Without all question you are to be reckoned (inter plebem) but as the ordinary sort of people, even as the vulgar, and wisdom is dead with you ; if ever your had any wisdom your wisdom is faded, your parts are spoiled, you have outlived your prime ; you are not the men you pretend to be, the choicest and the chiefest, the cream and flower of all ; no, your speech betrayes you, and saith you are of the people, of vulgar judgements and common understandings. I see no depth or mystrie in any thing ye have spoken.* Thus the Pharisees speak, *Have any of the rulers beleev'd on him ? but this people (this common people, this vulgar) who knoweth not the law, are curs'd,* *Joh. 7. 49.*

עם *dele-*
ctus populi.
Rab. Mos. ben
Nahman.

Secondly, By *the people*, some of the Rabbins understand the choicest, the elect of the people, so the language is ironical. *No doubt but ye are the people, the choice, the chosen people : the chose*

chosen of God, his elect and precious ones, his favorites and familiars, to whom he opens his bosom, and reveals his secrets; ye are the Church and people of God, to whom the divine Oracles are committed. We are thrust out among the prophane.

Again, Ye are the people, that is, the chosen of the people, the representative of the whole nation; as we may say of the House of Commons in Parliament, Ye are the people of England, that is, the people have chosen you, and confide in you, as the wisest, the most judicious and faithfull of your several countries, for the carrying on of the affairs of the Kingdom, and the maintaining of their proper rights. In this sense (though they are but a few hundreds, yet) they are *the people of the Kingdom*. Job taxeth his friends as arrogating this, „ Ye are the people, ye are they that would seem

„ to be a whole nation of men, ye (sure) have got away all the wit
„ from the world, ye would be accounted as man-kind, or as the
„ flower of the universe, ye take it upon you as if all the world
„ were epitomized in you three, as if all wise, learned and knowing
„ men had delivered up and put over their judgements and under-
„ standings, their all, into your hands; yea as if wisdom had yeel-
„ ded her self captive to you, and ye had devoured all knowledge;
„ Surely ye are the man. „ The Lord by the Prophet *Jeremy*
(Chap 5. 1. bids then *run to and fro through the streets of Jerusa-*
lem, to see if they could finde a man: And the old Cynick went into
a throng with a torch by day, to finde a man. *A man of wisdom*
and integrity is The man, other men compared to him are but beasts.
Zophar at the twelfth verse of the former chpater, compares *Job*
to the wilde asses colt, and numbers him among the beasts; here
Job fits him with an expression; you carry your selves (saith he)
as if you only were *The men*, and I, yea all men besides, *very beasts*
or wilde asses colts, that knew neither what ye say, nor whereof ye
affirm.

And wisdom shall die with you.

Moral wisdom is the knowledge of natural things and of their causes. Divine wisdom is the true knowledge of God and of our selves. We may suppose both wisdoms intended here. As if he had said, *you pretend to so much wisdom, that if you should die, all that's called wisdom must surely die with you, there will be none ('tis to be feared') left in the world when you leave the world. When the Sun goes down, the light goes down, the*

*Vos estis lectis-
simi in toto po-
pulo ac velut
columnæ totius
nationis. Merc.*

Vos estis hominum universitas. Tygur. Amicos modestè reprehendit asperso tamen medico siue sale siue felle sub ironiæ forma, Sanct.

Quoniam Zo-
phar Fobum
vellicando, pul-
lo onagri, i. e.
stupidissimo
bruto compara-
verat, ideo di-
cit, vos estis ho-
mines, ceteri
ad vos bestia.
Merc.

Sapientia est rerum divinarum & humanarum, causarumque quibus hæ res continentur scientia. Cicer. l. 2. de Off.

deride the priests of Baal, 1 King 18. 27. Cry aloud, for he is a god, either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth and must be awaked. When the Prophet Micaiah (1 King 22. 17.) was called for to give his opinion about Ahab's expedition to Ramoth Gilead, he knew what they would have him vote (they expected he should join with the rest, and say what they had said) and therefore when Ahab asked, shall we go up to Ramoth Gilead? yea, saith he, go up and prosper. I know you have a minde to go up, I pray go, Ahab relented it as a scorn, and therefore adds, How oft shall I adjure thee that thou tell me nothing but that which is true in the Name of the Lord? They who resolve upon their way, before they ask counsell, are often counsel'd according to their own way; and are led to error in scorn, because they had no love unto the truth. We finde the Apostle Paul in the highest elevation of his spirit, expressing himself in language extreamly parallell with this of Job. It seems the Corinthians much like the Laodiceans, had boasted of their spirituall fullnesse, that they were rich, and encreased with goods, and had need of nothing. Yea, saith the Apostle; I know ye are, I will be of your opinion too for once, (1 Cor. 4. 8.) Now ye are full, now ye are rich, (all things go bravely with you) ye have reigned as Kings without us, that is, you exalt your selves above us here, as much as a King is above his own subjects, you are supream. I and Apollos, whose Ministry God was pleased to use in planting and watering the Gospel among you, are now looked upon as mean fellows, as men of low and poor parts, or at best but as some good honest dull Preachers, not worthy to be named the same day with your new and high-flown teachers (all this is but an holy scorn put upon them, as his correction in the next line imports). I would to God (saith he) that ye did reign (namely in deed and in truth, I shall not envy you, only I would be bold to put in for a part with you) I would to God ye did reign, that we also might reign with you, I would be glad to share in those gallant Gospel notions you so much brag of: but I fear your portion is but small in true spirituall Gospel knowledge, except in your own conceits, and there you abound sufficiently. Again in the 10th vers. though in another stile, yet fully to the sense, and almost the words of Job; We are fools for Christs sake, but ye are wise in Christ, we are weak, but ye are strong, ye are honourable but

we

Ridet spiritus
carnales, ridet
caro spirituales.
Descendit ad
gravissimam
ironiam ut am-
bitiosos illos ad
ruborem vel in-
vitos cogat.
Bez. in loc.

Postquam seri-
o absque figu-
ris vanam co-
rum confiden-
tiam repressit,
nunc ironica
quoque eam
deridet. Calvin.

Hec antithesis
tota est ironica
& plena oculis.
Bez.

quietſſe in what they reſolve; They, who would be eſteemed to ſpeak nothing but principles and *poſtulata*, which muſt be ſwallowed, without chewing, by an implicit faith; They, who require aſſent, rather then perſwade it, may juſtly fall under the weight, and feel the ſmart of this ſcornfull objugation, *ye are the men, and wiſedoms ſhall die with you.* The Apoſtle is expreſſe, *He that thinks* (that is, proudly conceits) *he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know* 1 Cor. 8. 2. what then, doth he know, who thinks (which he cannot without higheſt pride) that he knoweth all things, and that all men muſt know (if they will know any thing) from him?

Secondly Obſerve,

All kinde of ſcorn, is not alwaies uncomely.

We may without breach of charity, or ſtain of holineſſe, check pride with deriſion, and ſpeak them below men, who ſpeak themſelves above men, or act what is unworthy of men. The Jews are taught by God himſelf to deride the proud King of Babylon, *Iſa. 14. 4. Then ſhalt take up this proverb (or taunting ſpeech) againſt the King of Babylon, and ſay, How hath the oppreſſour ceaſed, the golden city ceaſed! &c. verſ. 9, 10. Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming; it ſtirreth up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the earth: it hath raiſed up from their thrones all the Kings of the nations; All they ſhall ſpeak into thee and ſay, Art thou alſo become weak as we? art thou alſo become as one of us?* This is the proverb which was to be taken up againſt the King of Babylon, and it is a taunting proverb indeed. Not only ſhould the great Princes then alive (who verſ. 8.) are expreſſed under the ſhadow of firre trees and the cedars of Lebanon, rejoice againſt him: but even the dead whom he had oppreſſed are here brought in, insulting over him. When the Babylonian ſhould tumble down to hell, the Princes there are repreſented riſing from their places to give this great Prince the upper hand and the higheſt room in that kingdom of darkneſs. Thus hell it ſelf is ſaid to be moved, and to be as it were in a hurry, how to entertain that mighty King, that he who had been chief in wickedneſſe and in pride, might have this right, to be chief in torment. The dialogue which the dead are ſaid to have with that deceaſed King, is ſomewhat like thoſe in which Alexander and others are derided by the dead in Lucian; *Art thou become like to us? &c.* In what a heat of heavenly zeal doth Eliſh deride

thren or would be reckoned for more than an ordinary man, when I say, I have understanding as well as you, for truly who knows not such things as these? yours is but the common Ephah, and your measure but the measure of a man.

I have understanding as well as you.

Non sum excors neque cor perdidit.

The Hebrew is, *I have a heart as well as you.* The heart in Scripture is put, as for the affections, so likewise for the understanding: a man without understanding is a man without an heart: the heart is the treasury wherein the precepts and maxims of holy knowledge are laid up; *A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth good things. Hear now this. O foolish people, and without understanding,* the Hebrew is, *and without heart,* Jer. 5. 21. And in the 34th of this book of Job, vers. 32. *Let men of understanding tell me,* the Originall is, *Let men of heart tell me:* And the Latines call a wise man (*Cor. datum*) a hearty piece, a man of heart. The name of one of the twelve Apostles was *Lebbaeus* (from *leb* the heart) signifying as much as wise or understanding. Some, for, *I have understanding,* ready, *I have courage and height of spirit, as well as you;* The heart in Scripture is often put for courage, 2 Sam. 17. 10, *He that is a valiant man, whose heart is as the heart of a lyon, shall utterly melt,* that is, his courage shall fail. So the Prophet threatens that *the mighty mens hearts in Moab in that day shall be as the heart of a woman in her pangs,* Jer. 48. 41. The failing of the heart is the failing of courage: that's a good sense here, *I have courage as well as you,* or *I have spirit to stand to my cause and maintain what I have asserted, notwithstanding all the contempt and contradictions which you have poured upon me; you have not yet made my heart fall, though my body, though my estate be cast down. You have loaded me with reproaches and heavy censures, but my spirit bears your infirmity in doing so.*

לֹא אֶפְסָה

Non cado a vobis, vel praevobis Hebraismus est, quo cadere significat abjectum esse & inferiorem.

I am not inferiour to you. I have the same for kinde, and I have as much of it as you. The Hebrew is very elegant, *I do not fall before you,* a man that falls before another, is subdued and overcome. He that falls under in wrestling, is prevailed over: I do not fall as the weaker, I yet keep my ground and stand upon my legs. So the word

is used, *Nehem. 6. 16.* When those enemies perceived how God dealt with his people, the text saith, *they were cast down in their own eyes*, or, fell before their own eyes, that is, they were ashamed and dejected because they saw the prosperity of the Jews.

There may be a threefold sense of this, *I am not inferiour to you*, or, *I do not fall before you.*

First, I am not inferiour to you in honour and dignity, *I am as great a man as you.*

Secondly, It may refer to his holiness, I am not inferiour to you in grace, *I am as good a man as you.*

Thirdly, Which is specially meant, I am not inferiour to you in knowledge and understanding, *I am as wise a man as you.* Some render it thus, *I yet fall, trip, or stumble no more then you, and I hope to stand my ground in this controversie as long as you doe stand against me.*

Hence Observe,

First, *That in some cases, self-commendation is not uncomely.*

To boast of our understanding proceeds from the want of it: but a man may say, *I have understanding as well as you*, without a boast. This is a very tender point: example from the servants of God in Scripture; teacheth us to be more ready to speak and write our blots and failings, then our good works or praises; And the rule of Scripture is, *Let another man praise thee and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips,* (Prov. 27. 2.) The Apostle also is expresse, that self-commendation is no commendation. (2 Cor. 10. 18.) *Not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth.* To have praise of other men, is better then to have praise of our selves, but to have praise of God is better then to have praise of men: Yet when men dispraise us maliciously, we may justly praise our selves. Such praise is but to doe our selves justice, which we are more bound to doe, then to any other man.

There is a twofold commendation of our selves, There is a sinfull self-commendation, when we desire to be lifted up in the opinion of the world. There is a lawfull self-commendation, when we desire to be lifted up, lest the glory God should be cast down. When the honour of God is in danger to be abated in our abatings, we may safely take all due honour to our selves: yea we are bound to honour and make the most (we possibly can) of our selves with truth, when either the truth or honour of

Christ must be lessened, if we do not. *I think* (saith Paul) *that I have the spirit of God*, (1 Cor. 7. 10.) he speaks not as if he doubted w^{ether} he had, but to reprove those who slighted him as if he had not the spirit of God. While he saith only, *I think I have the spirit of God*, he saith more to his purpose, then if he had asserted strongly, *I have the spirit of God*. The confidence of the false Apostles, that they had the spirit, gave occasion not only to suspect whether they had it, but to conclude, that they had it not: Pauls modesty in but thinking, gave occasion to be resolute in concluding that he had the spirit.

Further, Job doth not only commend himself positively, and say, I have understanding, I have wisdom, but he commends himself comparatively, which is, the most displeasing way of commendation. We use to say, *comparisons are odious*, and subject to misconstruction: Yet Job commends himself, at least by comparing himself with, if not by preferring himself before the foremost of his friends, *I am not inferior to you*.

Hence Observe,

A man in some cases may so stand upon his own honour, as not to yeeld or submit to others at all.

The Apostles counsell is, *in lowlinesse of minde, let each esteeme other better then themselves*, (Phil. 2. 3.) and yet a time may come when a man with lowlinesse of minde enough may judge himself better then another: When the matter lies between Saints and Saints (of such the Apostle there speaks) one Saint should not lift up himself above another, they should rather give honour to one another, and think others better then themselves: *If any man hath wherein to boast, I much more* (saith Paul, Phil. 3. 4.) yet he calls himself *lesse then the least of all Saints*; amongst Saints he cares not though he were accounted the least of Saints; But when his Ministry and Apostleship was under-rated, he speaks of himself at the highest rate, 2 Cor. 11. 5. *I suppose I was not a whit behinde the very chiefeſt Apostles*, fully the language of Job here, *I am not inferiour to you*, no not to the best of you. But were some of the Apostles greater and better then others? was there inferiority and superiority amongst them? No, Apostleship as an office is of equall honour in all Apostles; but even amongst Apostles some had more excellent gifts and greater enlargements, God did communicate himself more to one then to another. *one of those starres differed from another starre in glory;*

glory: Thus among Apostles some one might be chief; Thus Paul was not behinde (which I take for a modest expression, that he was even with, yea that he, in some things; went before or outwent) the chiefest of the Apostles. He indeed confesseth at the 12th chapter of the same Epistle, vers. 11, 12. *I am become a fool in glorying*; as if he had said, it is the guise and character of a fool, affectedly to commend himself, but (I have not affected it) ye have compelled me to it, for I ought to have been commended by you (that is, ye ought to have given testimony to my integrity, and to have maintained the honour of my Ministry) for in nothing am I behinde the very chiefest Apostles, though I be nothing; though you through envy account me nothing, and though I in humility would account my self nothing, yet (being now put to it) I must speak it out, *I am not behind the very chiefest Apostles*, or as some render from the letter of the Greek; *I want nothing (not a hairs breadth) of their measure, who are Apostles above measure, I am as much an Apostle as they who are more then much* τὸν ὅπερ ἀλλὰ
Apostles. All this while Paul was no Braggadochio, no vain *Thraso*. He doth not contend personally with the Apostles for *preheminance or primacy*, but he checks those who hoped to be excused in undervaluing him, because they valued other Apostles above him, or pretended to have received Gospel mysteries from some other of the Apostles (whose great confidents and familiars they would be esteemed) beyond all that Paul had ever yet taught. Paul (I say) never wrangled with any of the Apostles for the upperhand, he never said to Matthew, Thomas or Andrew, &c. *I am not behind you, or, I am a better man then thou*: But because they made use of the parts and gifts of some of the Apostles to slight him, he who some where saith, *I am not worthy to be called an Apostle*, saith here, *I am not behind the greatest, the chiefest of the Apostles*. Thus we may stand upon terms of credit with any who lay our persons low, that they may disparage our work, and lay that service low to which God hath called us.

Solomon gives us an excellent observation (Prov. 25. 26.) *A righteous man falling down before the wicked, is as a troubled fountain and a corrupt spring*. Some enterpret it thus, A righteous man falling into sin, before, that is, in the company or presence of the wicked, is as a corrupt spring, many begin to suspect that his waters are not wholesome, when they see such corrup-

tion swimming at the top, and ſo reſuſe to drink him any more, ſc. to accept his counſels or inſtructions. This is a uſefull explication; yet I rather give the ſence from the point in hand; *A righteous man falling*, that is, baſely ſubmitting, or creeping poorly to a wicked man, *is as a troubled fountain*. Many a righteous man is made to fall down before the wicked, *Abel* fell down before *Cain*, for he murdered him, and ſo have thouſands of righteous ſouls fallen before their bloody persecutors: but for a righteous man actively to fall down, to crouch or ſtoop to wicked ones, either through fear or flattery, is an act unworthy a righteous man, A righteous man thus falling before the wicked, what is he? or to what ſhall we liken him? *Solomon* tell us, *he is as a troubled fountain, and a corrupt ſpring*. A righteous man is a wholeſome fountain, a ſpring of pure water, many may reſreſh themſelves at him: but he by this his fooliſh act, becomes a troubled fountain, he hath mudded the purity of his own ſoul, with worldly reſpects and carnall intereſts, elſe he had never bowed to that generation of golden Idols, and graven Images, Noble *Mordecai* would not fall before proud *Haman*. He choſe rather (if that muſt have been the iſſue of it) to fall down by his power, then to fall down unto his perſon. Giants are called *Nephalim*, from this word, *Fallers*, becauſe men beholding their vaſt limbs and dreadful ſtature (like the Army of *Iſrael* before great *Goliath*) fall before them for fear. There are Giants ſtill in every land (though not in body, ſuch are very rare, yet in minde) they would be *Nephalim*, all muſt fall before, and ſubmit unto them; they would be *Joſeph*s, every mans ſheaf muſt make obeiſance unto theirs. *Paul* would never fall down to falſe *Apoſtles*, nay he would not to a true *Apoſtle*, when he did not walk according to the truth, *he withſtood Peter to the face, becauſe he was to be blamed*, Gal. 2. 11, 14. Though Chriſtians ought in lowlineſſe to ſubmit one to another, and in duty to ſubmit to Magiſtracy, and the higher powers, yet they muſt not ſubmit to the pride or luſt of any how high ſoever. Thus to bow before wicked men, is ſomewhat like bowing to an Idol. To adore them is to diſhonour God, yea to make them Gods.

Who knows not ſuch things as theſe?

*Hab. cum quo
non ſunt hec.*

As he had ballanced himſelf with his friends, ſo he thought any man might. Such a treaſure of knowledge as this, is no mans peculiar:

peculiar: We may gather up such upon the common, we need not travel to the oracles of learning for it, he that knows any thing knows what you say; He that is not (such as you think me to be) *a wild asses colt*, a very fool, may fathom all your notions, they carry no such depth but that line enough may be had in any mans brain to reach their bottom, *Who knows not such things as these?* Note from it,

First, *There are some common principles and easie truths, which fall under every mans apprehension.*

Who knows not such things as these? The Apostle (*Heb 6. 1.*) speaks of the *first principles of the doctrine of Christ*. The objects of knowledge are of various degrees, according to the degrees of capacity in the subject. (*Heb. 5. 14.*) we reade of *strong meat for men of full age, and milk for babes*. The youngest childe feeds on milk. Who knows not such things as these? Some principles in Religion are of so easie a digestion, that even babes in Christ may feed upon them and suck them in. We say of those commodities which are rich and high prized, *they are not every mans money*; so we may say of those truths which are dark and mysterious, *they are not for every understanding*: He that hath an understanding, may understand so much of the mystery of Christ as may light him safe to heaven; though some things are too high for those who are highest to understand fully, while they are here upon the earth.

Secondly Observe, *Who knows not such things as these?*

It is a shame not to be acquainted with common principles.

Every one knows these things; what? not understand that which the meanest may understand? We finde the Apostle improving this argument, *Rom. 2. 4.* Where (having convinced the Gentiles in the former Chapter for sinning against the light of nature and the benefits of creation) he proceeds to convince the Jews for sinning against the light of Scripture, and the mercies of redemption. *Despisest thou the riches of the goodnesse and forbearance of God, &c. Not knowing that the goodnesse of God leadeth thee to repentance?* Art thou a Jew, one that boastest of so much knowledge, and dost not thou know this common principle? dost not thou know the meaning of the goodnesse and forbearance of God? every childe in holy knowledge knows the voice of mercy, that it bespeaks our return to God, or leads us to repentance. The Apostle deals with the *Corinthians* upon

the same ground (1 Cor. II. 14.) about the wearing of long hair, *Doth not nature it self teach you?* it is a shame for you to be ignorant of that which you may learn at the school and university of nature; nature teacheth, *that if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him;* It is not only a sin, but a dishonour for a man, to do that, which his being a man tels him he should not doe. By a like insinuation Paul labours to keep the Ephesians at furthest distance from grosse sins; *for this ye know* (saith he) *that no whoremonger, &c. hath any inheritance in the kingdom of God and of Christ.* This is a received truth; do you not know this? I know ye know it. Some truths can hardly be known by all our study, many are known without any study. *It is almost as hard to be ignorant of some things, as it is to know other things.* There will be a sore reckoning with the world one day, because they are not seen in the deep mysteries of Christ, having been often shewed them; but when it shall be found that they are not seen in that, which they could not but see, except they had shut their eyes, this will render them altogether inexcusable, and shut their mouths for ever. *The more easie any truth is, the harder will be our suffering and the greater our sin, if we attain not to the knowledge of it.* Thirdly, *Jobs* friends carried it, as if their discourse had been all riddle and mysterie, yet he tells them, *Who knows not such things as these?*

Hence Note,

It is a vanity to pretend mysteriousnesse about vulgar truths.

Some cover the sun with clouds, and put disguises upon the plainest doctrines. They dig deep for that which lies above ground; and in stead of enlightning what is dark, darken the clearest light. They speak and write of things as new and never known, when as all that hear or read them may justly reprove them with that ancient Proverb, *You tell us news,* or in the language of this text, *who knows not such things as these?*

Job having thus rebuked the pride of his friends, begins to check their scorn,

Verse 4. *I am as one mocked of his neighbour, who calleth upon God and he heareth him; the just upright man is laughed to scorn.*

I am as one mocked of his neighbour.

The word signifies scorning joined with laughter, strictly called

led deriſion. The letter of the Hebrew is, *I am the laughter* (the ſport or paſtime) of *my neighbour*; he ſpeaks partly in the firſt, and partly in the third perſon: He doth not ſay, *I am as one mocked of my neighbour*, that had caſt it too directly upon his friends, but, *I am as one that is mocked of his neighbour*, and ſo lets it light where it will. *Jobs* comforters had high thoughts of themſelves, and low thoughts of him: A man that is mocked, is under the greateſt contempt, and meaneſt eſtimation. *I am as one mocked, &c.* as if *Job* had ſaid, *In ſtead of comforting, informing and ſupporting me, you have mocked me in my adverſity.*

Noluit Job dicere prima perſona, ſocio meo ſed ſocio ſuo in tertiâ, ut monetur. Merc.

Obſerve, *It is an addition to affliction, to be mocked in affliction.*

Mocking is one of the greateſt afflictions; amongſt the ſufferings and cruel perſecutions that the Saints endured, the Apoſtle mentions this, *They had tryall of cruel mockings* (Heb. 11. 36.) *Who knows how deep ſharp words will enter, and what wounds they will make?* They not only wound the name, but the ſpirit, they ſtab to the heart. It was one great part of the ſufferings of *Chriſt*, he was mocked and uſed like a fool in a play, they put a robe on his back, a reed in his hand, and a crown upon his head; and when he hung on the croſſe finiſhing the work of our ſalvation, they (in higheſt ſcorn) *bid him ſave himſelf.* The Apoſtle *Jude* aſſures us that the Lord is coming to execute judgement upon all and to convince all that are ungodly of all their hard ſpeeches which they have ſpoken, *Hard ſpeeches are as bad as hard blows, and amongſt all hard ſpeeches mockings are the hardeſt. A man will eaſier receive a blow from his friend, then a ſcorn from his friend: Scorning is fundamentally oppoſite to the fundamental laws of love. This is the ſecond ingredient which im- bittered his ſufferings, I am as one that is mocked of his neighbour.*

Secondly Note, *The nearer they are from whom we receive diſcourteſies, the nearer they go to our hearts.*

A wound from a hand afar off, is far off from our hearts. What? Thou my friend, Thou my familiar uſe me thus? The mock of a neighbour is cutting, almoſt killing. The unkindenes of a friend bath moſt of the enemy in it. When Chriſt perceived his own Diſciples withdrawing, he was extreemly troubled at it. Many of the people were offended and went back, and walked no more with him, and he complained not, he expected no better

Ab amicis ac- ceptâ contume- lia aculeum habens mole- ſiſſimum.

from

from them : but when he saw his Disciples hang a little off, he ex-
 postulates, *Will ye also go away?* (Joh. 6. 67.) what, you my Disciples?
 as if he had said, *that will be a crosse indeed, your departure will be a*
home-affliction; it is no wonder if others do it, but will ye do it?
will ye go away too? And because the sufferings of Christ, were
 to be the highest in all aggravating circumstances, that they
 might answer all the aggravations of our sins, therefore he was
 wounded (as the Prophet speaks) in the house of his friends,
 betrayed by his own Disciple, and by a Disciple kissing him.
Betrayest thou the Son of man with a kisse? (Luk. 22. 48.) Any trea-
 son is bad enough, but the treason of a Disciple, and of a Disci-
 ple kissing is worst of all. But as it behoved Christ to fulfill all
 righteousness, so to receive all unkindnesses, and therefore this.
 Though (as I have noted already) Job was not a type of Christ,
 yet their sufferings were very like: Christ was wounded by the
 lips, and Job by the tongue of a friend. I am as a man mocked
 of his neighbour.

Who calleth upon God and he answereth him.

There is a difference among expositours about the antecedent
 of this *Who*: whether it should be refer'd to Job, or to the
 neighbour about whom Job speaks. I am as a man mocked of his
 neighbour, who, which neighbour calls upon God and he answers
 him. So some understand it, and then the words are a description
 of Job's neighbour, I am as a man that is mocked of his neighbour,
 and what kinde of neighbour is he? he is one that useth to call
 upon and to be heard of God, he is, a man acquainted with God
 in prayer. The Hebrew word which we translate to call upon
 God, notes a sort of men whose chief busines or trade was to call
 upon or invoke the Name of God. (Psal. 99. 6.) Moses and
 Aaron among his Priests, and Samuel among them that call upon his
 name, they called upon the Lord and he answered them; implying,
 that it was their special calling to call upon God: So saith Job,
 I am as one mocked of his neighbour; which neighbour is one that
 calls upon God, that's his profession or his work; and 'tis as a
 painfull so a most noble work. Prophets and Priests were pro-
 fessed callers upon God, That interpretation of the word gives
 the sense thus, I am derided by neighbours, who yet are such as
 would be loth that God should deride them: they deride me whose
 duty it is to pray for me, and to pray with me; you are men of prayer,

men

קריא

Dicitur cui ex
 officio incum-
 bit invocare
 Deum Bold.

Sicine ludus
 & fabula ero
 etiam illis, qui
 in Dei famula.
 et socii mei
 sunt ejusdem-
 que consortes
 ministerii?
 Bold.

men that call upon God, and you have the favour to be heard of God, God is facile and favourable unto you, but ye are hard and severe to me, you shew me no favour; how uncomely a thing is this, that you who wait to be heard of God should not hear me? or that you who are heard of God should deride me? This exposition as it may stand with the letter of the Text, so it may teach us this lesson.

They who have had experience of Gods tenderness to help them and hear their prayers, should be very tender to others when they call to them and seek their help.

What? Should I be mocked of a neighbour that useth to call upon God? such carriage looks like theirs who call not upon God. You that have had answers from God in prayer, & know what it is to be answered, think what it is for you but to deny a friend, especially to mock a friend when he calls upon you in the day of his calamity. Will you take it well if God deny you, or send a mock in stead of an answer to your prayer? You that have any suit to God, be not hard, much less inexorable, when distressed friends sue unto you.

But the antecedent seems rather to be Job himself. I am as one mocked of his neighbour, who, that is, which man thus mocked, doth yet call upon God and he answers him: they mock him, but God doth not mock him. Or thus, I am as one that is mocked of his neighbour, who thereupon takes an advantage to call upon God, and go to God when he cannot be entertained, or is rejected by men, and he hears him. The vulgar translation reacheth this sense very clearly, He who is derided of his neighbour as I am, will call upon God, and God will hear him.

There is a difference in the latter clause, & he answereth him; we put it in the present tense, he answereth him; others in the preterperfect tense, he hath answered him; some in the future, he will answer him; he calleth upon God that he may answer him or to be answered by him: So Abraham speaks (Gen. 23. 8.) Intreat for me to Ephron that he may give me the cave of Machpelah; Thus here, he calls upon God, and he answereth him, that is, he calleth upon God that he may answer him, he hopeth to speed well in heaven with his petition, though he speed ill on earth.

Hence Observe. First,

It is the priviledge of the Saints when men fail and reject them, to make God their refuge, and their recourse to heaven.

A a

They

Ego risui sum
facio meo, qui
sc. socius, qu-
ties deum in-
clamar eum ex-
audit: qd de-
um in omnibus
facilem habet.
Merc.

Qui deridetur
ab amico, sicut
ego, in vocabit
deum & exau-
diat eum. Vulg.
Et respondet illi
i. e. ut exaudi-
atur ab eo, e-
mollietur inter-
pretatio si &
sumatur prout.
Antehac cum
ad deum clama-
rem, me exaudi-
re solebar, sed
& nunc eum
idem facturum
non despero, me
nunc qui tatis
sum vos mei
scij videtis?
Merc.

Ubi deest auxilium humanum, ibi maxime adest auxilium divinum. Aquin. in loc.

They who have interest in God, know how to make this improvement of it : If the world cast out the Saints, God will take them in : his stile is, *The helper of the friendless*. And *Dauids* experience was, *When my Father and my Mother forsake me, the Lord taketh me up* (Psal. 27. 10.) that is, *though my Father and Mother, who are neereſt to me, ſhould be ſo unnatural as to reſtrain their bowels, and forſake me ; or though they ſhould be reſtrained from doing me thoſe offices which nature dictates, yet the Lord takes me up, ſc. in the everlaſting arms of mercy: His love never changes, nor can any thing ſtop the motions of his love. His love is hotteſt to us when the love of man waxeth cold. The departures of friends bring him neerer to us, and where creature-comforts end, the comforts of God begin. They are in a ſad condition, who being caſt off by men, have not a God to call upon, and go unto. Only they who can have acceſſe to God, need not fear the reſceſſes of men.*

Secondly, Obſerve,

That the repulſes which we meet with in the world, ſhould drive us nearer to God.

I (ſaith Job) am mocked of my neighbour, what courſe ſhall I take? ſhall I lye down and vex? ſhall I fret my ſelf and pine away? I know a better way than that: I will call upon God, I will try what's to be had in heaven, now that the earth hath nothing for me; men have not an ear for me, but ſure enough God hath not only an ear to hear, but a heart to pity, and a hand to work deliverance. The holy Prophet reſolves, It is good for me to draw nigh to God (Pſal. 73. 28.) And when he ſaith, 'tis good, his meaning is, 'tis beſt. This poſitive is ſuperlative. It is more than good for us to draw nigh to God at all times, it is beſt for us to do ſo; and it is at our utmoſt peril not to do ſo; for ſo, (ſaith the Pſalme, ver. 27.) They that are farre from thee ſhall periſh, thou ſhalt deſtroy them that go a whoring from thee. It is dangerous to be farre from God, but it is more dangerous to go farre from him. Every man is farre off by nature, and wicked men go further off: The former ſhall periſh, the latter ſhall be deſtroyed: He that fares beſt in his withdrawings from God, fares bad enough; Therefore it is beſt for us to draw nigh unto God. He is the beſt friend at all times, and the only friend at ſome times. And may we not ſay, that God ſuffers and orders evil times, and the withdrawings of

of the creature for that very end, that we might draw neerer unto him? doth he not give up the world to a ſpirit of reviling and mocking, that he may ſtirre up in his people a ſpirit of praying? This is a gracious deſign of God, and we ſhould interpret the neglects, the contempts and ſcorns of the world, to be as the voice of God ſaying to us, *Come to me and ſee whether you ſhall not have better uſage*, ſee whether I will ſcorn you; you have loved the world too much, you have too much pleaſed your ſelves with the ſmiles and good looks of men; you have been taken & overtaken with the things of this life, come to me, and take (you cannot over-take) the things of eternal life. The leaſt things of Heaven are more noble than the greateſt things on earth. *Shall we not then prize the great things of Heaven much, when we can hardly enjoy the leaſt things of the earth?* Shall we not when we are mocked of our neighbours call upon God, we having this aſſurance, that he will not mock, but answer us?

And he answereth him.

The answer which God makes to ſuch as call upon him, is either to the outward or to the inward man: He answers the inward man, or the ſpirit of man, by a hint from his Spirit. Satisfaction to our ſpirits, is an answer from the Spirit. When the Lord (having ſaid to the ſoul, *I am thy ſalvation*) ſaith alſo, *I am thine honour, I am thy credit, I am thy liberty, I am thy riches, I am thy friend*, the ſoul is more abundantly filled than with riches, credit, liberty, friends, or honour. Again, answer comes to the outward man, providence ſpeaks to ſome as the ſpirit doth to others. We having called upon God, ſee the creature at work towards a redreſs of our evils, & a ſupply of our preſent wants. Under the Law God answered many waies: He answered by *Urim and by Thummim*, by *Prophets and by dreams*, by *visions and revelations*. And though we have not ſuch answers now, yet we have as ſure answers. God never receives any prayer which doth not receive an answer. We may call upon men and not be answered, men may go to Idols, to lying vanities, and not be answered; but if we go to God, we ſhall.

Hence Obſerve,

Prayer and ſeeking unto God are not in vain or fruitleſs.

The Lord will answer. Sometimes he answers before we call, and he gives before we ask; and he promiſeth if we ask he will

give, and answer if we call. Christ raiseth up our confidence that God will hear us, because men doe. (*Mat. 7. 9, 10.*) *What man (saith he) is there of you, whom if his Son ask bread, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he give him a Serpent?* Christ argues from that readiness which is in men (especially in those who are in relation to us) to give, that God will give much more. *If ye then being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your Children, how much more shall your Father which is in Heaven, give good things to them that ask him?* If a Father will answer when a son asks, much more will God: Yea though when a son asks, a Father will not answer; though when a son asks, a Father mocks, and in stead of bread gives him a stone, in stead of Fish a serpent, though in stead of granting, he crosses his sons petition; yet be confident your Father in Heaven will answer, he will not mock, he will not give stones for bread, nor a serpent for Fish, he loves to be giving, and to be giving good gifts is his delight.

Further, From these words taken together, we may Observe, That

As it is sinful, so it is extreemly dangerous to mock those who have the ear of God, or acceptance with God in prayer.

Will you use him ill that can go and tell God how you have used him, and shall be sure to be heard? It is uncomely to mock an enemy, it is more for one friend to mock another, it is yet worse to mock a friend in his affliction; but it is worst of all to mock any man living that is praying in Faith, and humbling himself before God. Such the Psalmist brands, *ye have shamed the Council of the poor, because God is his refuge.* (*Psal. 146.*) That is, ye have derided godly men, when ye have heard them pray in their affliction. The great wits and politicians of the world smile at the simplicity of those who make such a business of prayer in times of distress: who, when they hear of any troubles arising, presently give this counsel, come let us go pray and seek God. This counsel of the poor *they shame*, and think them silly fellows who give it. They had rather lay their heads together a plotting, then their hearts together a praying. And if such joyn in counsel to call for prayers in times of trouble, it is not out of an opinion, much less out of Faith that it will do any good, or prevail any thing, but only to please the people, or comply with a party: for in truth they shame those counsels of the poor,

as the poorest Counsels. Some are ashamed of prayers, and others will put them to shame who pray. The best I can do for such as deride prayer, or those who pray, is to pray for them, as Christ for his crucifiers, *Father forgive them, for they know not what they doe.* Doe you know what you doe, when you mock a man that can pray? I believe you do not, therefore I will tell you: you mock that spirit by which he prayes, you provoke God to whom he prayes, you stir up the whole Church against you, for whom he prayes, you set the chariots & horsemen of Israel against you, you turn armies against you, that is, you turn the prayers of all the people of God against you, when you turn against prayer. Do you know what it is to provoke such who can complain to God of your provocations? You were better have tales told of you to the greatest enemy you have in the world, then to have tales told of you unto God, by those, whom he is pleased to number among his friends.

Job having thus set forth how he had been assaulted by men, and how he had retreated to God; now laies down a general proposition, as a corollary or conclusion drawn from all, *The just upright man is laughed to scorn.*

The just upright man.

Job speaks still in the third person, he doth not say, *I who am a just upright man, am derided,* he speaks modestly as, Paul, 2 Cor. 12. *I knew a man.* So here, *The just upright man.*

Both words are near a kinne in signification, the one at most doth but explain and heighten the other. *The just upright man,* is the man justly upright, or uprightly just. The latter word is plural in the Original, (as Gen. 6. 9.) noting a man that acts in the exactness of uprightness, even all manner of uprightnesses, or a man so upright, that he hath the uprightness of many men in him; for as we say of some men who are egregiously dishonest, that when dishonest men are scarce, they may go for twain; so some men are so exactly upright, that where upright men are scarce (as they are every where) they may be reckoned for two or many.

But how is this just man, who hath the uprightness of many upright men in him, entertained in the world? doe not all reverence and adore him? The next words shew us his usage. *The just upright man,*

צדיק
תמים

Iustus perfecti
perfectè iustus
i. e. iustissimus.
vel integritas
perfectio.
Vox Thamim
adverbialiter
potest sum.

Is laughed to scorn.

פִּנְשׁ
Irrisio justus
perfectus. Heb.
Hic te ludos
facit. Plaut.

He was mockt before, now he is *laughed to scorn*. The Original is the same, though the sence be intended; he is not only laughed at, but he is a laughter. *The perfect just is a mockage*, so Mr. Broughton, the abstract is put for the concrete. A man that is through in justice, through in integrity & purity, this man is made a laughing stock, a jest, a sport, he is loaded with disgrace, while some are unburdening themselves of sorrow. They resolve to laugh and be fat, to be merry and sing care away, but they want a theam, a subject, none so fit as *the just upright man*: Come let's passe upon him. Thus *He is laughed to scorn*. As if Job had said, *It is no great wonder to see that I am mocked of my neighbour, for this is according to the wont and old custome of the world, the just upright man meets with such dealing every where; it is no new thing which I suffer, mine is but a common lot with the best of the Saints. If I am laughed to scorn, so have my betters been.* Hence Note,

First, *That holiness is under disgrace among unholy men.*

It is not alwaies a disparagement to be laughed at; the best may be laughed at, *the just upright man is so*. Jeremiah was more then so, he was a Prophet of the Lord, yet he saith, *I was a derision to all my people, and their song all the day*, Lam. 3. 14. He was a derision, and a derision to all his people. Some read thus, *I, together with all my people, am a derision*, as noting that he and all that adhered to him or owned him, were derided. So speaks the Prophet Isaiah typically of Christ, chap. 8. 18. *Behold I, and the Children which thou hast given me, are for signes and for wonders in Israel*. Our translation makes all his people deriders of him? And then all doth not include every individual, but only shews the great and general Apostacy of that people, from all respect to this Prophet, or to his ministry. How often doth holy David, that Heavenly singer, complain of those who made hellish songs upon him? And Job complains of this more then once, read Chap. 17. 2. 6. Chap. 21. 3. &c. Paul was one of the ablest speakers, in the mysteries of the Gospel, that ever lived: yet when he came to Athens (Act. 17.) they say, *what will this babler say?* Solomon gives us a proverb to this point (Prov. 14. 2.) *He that walketh in his uprightness, feareth the Lord, but he that is perverse in his waies, despiseth him.* It is a truth, if we understand the antecedent

cedent to him, to be the Lord, and so make the opposition thus, *He that walketh in his uprightness, feareth the Lord, but he that is perverse in his waies despiseth him, that is, despiseth the Lord.* But the meaning of the proverb is this, *A man walking in his uprightness feareth God, but a perverse man will despise him that walketh in his uprightness; you are so precise, you go so gingerly, as if you were passing a narrow bridge over a deep precipice, you will not turn aside or step awry, not you: thus he is despised.* The Apostle reports us a great example of this unholy scorn, (*Gal. 4. 29.*) *He that was born after the flesh, did persecute him that was born after the spirit. Ishmael persecuted Isaac.* Moses tells us the manner how, and the weapon wherewith; *Ishmael did not lift up his hand against Isaac (as Cain did against Abel) but his tongue; He mocked him, (Gen. 21. 9.)* Those greatest differences in divine Heraldry of being *born after the flesh and after the spirit*, shew where the quarrel lay, it was the spiritualness of *Isaac*, which rendered him so obnoxious to his carnal brother *Ishmael*. *Isaac* was born after the spirit, & doubtless he shewed some fruits of the spirit, which *Ishmael* did not relish, and therefore mocked him. *Even so it is now* (saith the Apostle there) & we may now say, *even so it is now*: the reason of it is that of the Apostle, (*1 Cor. 2. 14.*) *The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him.* A rational man laughs at, and scorns a foolish thing; Now the natural man hath reason enough (he may be a man of the most sublimated reason) but having no grace, he understands not the things of the spirit of God, therefore *they are foolishness unto him*; Those things which are fullest of Divine wisdom, are counted most foolish by him that understands them not. As they are fools who cannot understand, so some wise men count many things foolish which yet are above their understanding. No marvail then, if they use them as foolish things, if they mock and scorn them; no marvail, if they deride those who trouble themselves with such baubles and toys as they conceive the things of God to be. No marvail, if they count them a company of hairbrain fellows, who are most conscientious about them. Hence it is that Gospel simplicity is mockt as simpleness, punctual obedience, as scrupulousness, sorrow for sin, as dumpishness, zeal, as madness, contempt of the world as ignorance of the worth of it, self-denial, as a wronging of our selves. It is recorded in the life
of

Christiani ab
Ethnicis derisi
sunt qui vide-
bantur genus
hominum super-
stitionis nove
et malefica
Sui in vita
Neron.

of Nero, that the Christians were despised and mockt as a sect of silly fools, by the wise Citizens and grave Senators of Rome, because they seemed to use a strange kinde of superstition, or a new Religion, and would be wiser in their generation then the rest of the world. Reproach is one of Satans choice engines to batter *Sion* with, he hath scarce such another shaft in all his quiver to wound Religion at the heart with. This Lyon in the way frights many from entring into, or appearing in the wayes of God. It causeth others to apostize and forsake the wayes of God, after they have entred into, and for a time appeared in them. As *Zedekiah* durst not obey the word of the Lord, in rendring himself to the *Babylonians*, so many are afraid to obey the word of the Lord in rendring themselves up to *Sion*, lest some finding them there should mock them, *Jer. 38. 19.*

Secondly Observe,

As holiness in any degree is subject unto scorn, so they who are most holy, meet with most scorn.

The just upright man, who would be holy to the height, shall have scorn to the height. If a man serve God (as *David* daunced before the Ark) with all his might, a *Michaels* wit will mock and teem with a prophane jest, though she be cursed with barrenness all her life after. That childe of the flesh made her flesh childless unto the day of her death, *2 Sam. 6. 23.* If a man do (as Christ expects) some singular things, he may quickly be laughed at for singularity. *Paul* in the high actings of his faith was accounted mad, *2 Cor. 5. 13.* It is possible to move in the ordinary course and common round of Religion, and to have fair quarter, yea to have respect and be accounted wise in the world; but he that will be a just upright man, that is, he that sticks at small matters, & acts the greatest; He that will not go an hairs breadth from the minde of Christ, and will do his whole minde; he that will walk precisely, accurately, and as we say *in print*, this man may soon have the honour to be called a fool *in print*, at best he shall be laughed at, let him look for it; all holiness may come under contempt, but the more holy you are, the more subject you are unto contempt: never think to get credit in the world by your holiness: It is enough that holiness hath credit with God and good men. The Apostle assures us (*Heb. 11.*) That those worthies of the Jewish Church (whose names sparkle like bright starres in the Firmament of that Chapter) obtained a
good

good report, through faith (verſ. 2.) But of whom, or with whom? did the world think the better of them, or well of them, becauſe of thoſe high and heroical actings of their faith? No, the 36th. Verſe tells us, they were both ſcourged, and mockt by the world for all their faith. Theſe gallant men in grace, had a good report with none but gracious men, and the God of grace. If we will now live after their rate by faith, and walk in the uppermoſt regions of Religion, we muſt expect a good report there only, where they found it. *Thoſe works of faith which are moſt above reaſon ſeem to be without reaſon,* and that which is moſt pleaſing unto God, ſeems to have not ſo much as any thing of a man in the eyes of many men: you venture not only liberty, eſtate and life, but your very diſcretion if you walk in the cleaneſt paths of wiſdom. *Few have holy wiſdom enough to be accounted fools, or ſeriousneſs enough in the things of God to be laughed at, eſpecially to be laughed to ſcorn.* No man knows where his worldly loſſes will end, when once he hath gained Chriſt. It is an experienced truth, which is lent us by a *Noble Patriot* yet living. *That man will but deceive himſelf who hopes to ſave any thing by his Religion but his ſoul. The juſt upright man is laughed to ſcorn, and the more juſt he is, the more he is laughed at.*

JOB Chap. 12. Vers. 5, 6.

He that is ready to slip with his Feet, is as a lamp despised in the thought of him that is at ease.

The Tabernacles of Robbers prosper, and they that provoke God, are secure, into whose hand God bringeth abundantly.

IN the former context which contained the preface to this ensuing discourse, Job taxeth the pride and self-conceitedness, the scorn and contemptuousness of his friends. They thought themselves the chief of men, and mocked him, as if he had not been so much as a man, or not to be numbred among men.

Now he enters upon the argument it self; And in these two Verses laies down two positions in direct opposition to what Zophar had asserted. He at the 17th. verse of the 11th. Chapter, describes the state of a godly man, exceeding the light of the noon-day, and of the morning. *Thine age shall be clearer than the noon-day, and thou shalt be as the morning, &c.* And at the 20th. verse he gives ungodly men their doom. *The eyes of the wicked shall fail, and their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost.* Both these conclusions are contradicted by Job, the former in the 5th. Verse, and the latter in the 6th. In the 5th. *He that is ready to slip with his feet, is as a lamp despised*; As if he had said, *Thou tellest me that a godly man shall be brighter than the sun at noon, that his brightness shall increase like the morning sun, more and more unto the perfect day*; whereas, alas, I see all the light which many a godly man hath, no bigger than a candle or a lamp, and that not like the light of a great candle neither, or of a goodly beautiful lamp, but like the light of some poor candle of the sixteens, or of the meanest lamp. There is a great difference between a lamp and the sun. What is the light of the most shining lamp, to the light of the sun? but the difference is greater between the sun & a base blinking lamp. I see their light no clearer, than that of a despised lamp, whose light thou talk'st up to the sun at noon for clearness. The holiest men, if afflicted, do but smother instead of shining. Again, thou tellest me that *The eyes of the wicked shall fail, and that their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost*; but I have often seen and

can give thee proof of it, the eyes of such are blest, and refresh't with the desire of their eyes; they see what they most desire, prosperity in their dwellings. The Tabernacles of Robbers prosper, and they that provoke God are secure, into whose hand God bringeth abundantly. Thus the opposition stands in these two Verses, as they are an answer to what Zophar had promised as the portion of the righteous, and threatned as the lot of wicked men.

He that is ready.

That is, he that is very neer slipping. The Hebrew (*Nachon*) signifies to be prepared or disposed, yea to be destinated to such a purpose, it signifies also to be fixed and settled (*Psal. 108.*) O God, my heart is fixed, or, my heart is ready. He that is ready to slip, is, as it were, fixed to slip, he is set in a state wherein he cannot stay. All men in the world are in an unsettled estate, in a slippery condition, but some are in a more slippery condition, than others; They are (as we say) next door to destruction, within a step of danger, ready to tumble and fall from the pinnacle of their prosperity. There are preparations for ruine as well as for rising. *He that is ready*

Frequens est in Scriptura usus vocis נכון pro eo quod est dispositus, destinatus.

To slip with his feet.

There is a two-fold slipping with the feet spoken of in Scripture.

First, There is a slipping into sin; of that David speaks, *Psal. 73. 2.* As for me, my feet were almost gon, my steps had well nigh slipped, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked, that is, I had almost sinned, I was tempted to hard thoughts of God and of his waies, as he explains himself at the 13th. Verse of that Psalm, shewing what the slip was, Then said I, verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency; This was the thing he was ready to fall into, to look upon all his labour, as lost labour, as labour in vain, which he had bestowed in attendance upon the duties of holiness and repentance.

נעוץ Nutavit. Nutatio pedum denotat ruinam, calamitatem, casum adversum, & firmitas pedum constantem rerum secundarum statum.

Secondly, *Slipping with the feet*, is to fall into affliction. When we decay and decline in honour, credit, riches, and possessions, we may be said to have got a slip. 'Tis a proverbial speech, and we finde it frequent in Scripture; his foot shall slip, that is, he shall down, his state shall change. Moses describes the Lord thus speaking of his enemies (*Deut. 32. 35.*) To me

*belongeth vengeance and recompence, what then? Their foot shall slide in due time; these men supposed themselves settled upon a rock, that they were so established that nothing could remove them; but in due time they shall finde that they stood upon ice, or glass, their foot shall slide, they shall fall from their heights and seeming holds in due time. So (Psal. 94. 18.) When I said, my foot slippeth, thy mercy, O Lord, held me up, that is, when I gave my self for a lost man in the world, then the Lord supported me. (Jer. 13. 16.) Give glory to the Lord your God, before he cause darkness, and before your feet stumbls upon the dark mountains. Dark mountains, are mountains of sorrow and trouble, to stumble upon the dark mountains, is to be ruined among our troubles. To stumble, slip, fall, run all into the same sense. In pursuance of which, the state of wicked men is called a slippery state, and the place upon which they stand, a slippery place. Psal. 73. 18. David being much troubled at the prosperity of wicked men, and so troubled that his steps had well nigh slipt, staied, or recovered himself, by remembring that his enemies did not stand fast. I went into the Sanctuary of God, and there I found that thou didst set them in slippery places: and when he found that their estate was slippery, that they should shortly fall, then he kept his ground and stood upright. Who can envy or be grieved to see a man in an estate great and prosperous, wherein yet there is no continuance, or from which he must shortly fall, and in the fall bruise and hurt himself more, than he did comfort himself in his standing? all the things of this life, especially to wicked men, are set in slippery places. The world it self is slippery, and so is all that's in it. The world may be compared to that sea of glass (Rev. 4. 6.) It is a sea for the uncertain motions, and tempestuousness of it, and it is like a sea of glass for the slipperiness of it. Glass you know yields no good footing, neither doth the world to any that would stay themselves upon it. And as the sliding of our feet speaks the change, so the firmness of our feet, the establishment of our estate, Psal. 121. 3. He will not suffer thy foot to be moved; a man cannot go without moving of his feet; and a man cannot stand whose feet are moved. The foot by a *Synechdoche* is put for the whole body, and the body for the whole outward estate: so that, He will not suffer thy foot to be moved, is, he will not suffer thee, or thine to be moved or violently cast down. The power of thine opposers*

fers ſhall not prevail over thee, for the power of God ſuſtains thee. *He will not ſuffer, &c.* Many are ſtriking at thy heels, but they cannot ſtrike them up, while God holds thee up. If the will of thine enemies might ſtand, thou ſhouldeſt quickly fall. But God will not ſuffer, &c.

Hence Obſerve,

That the beſt earthly eſtate in it ſelf, is a tottering eſtate.

An earthly eſtate is ſo, whoſoever is the maſter of it, unleſs God will be the eſtabliſher of it. This text ſpeaks of the afflictions of the godly, their outward eſtate is full of uncertainties, their feet (treading earth) are ſubject to ſlide. David once thought himſelf ſo ſetled, that he ſhould never fall, *In my proſperity I ſaid, I ſhall never be moved, Lord, by thy favour thou haſt made my mountain to ſtand ſtrong, Pſal. 30. 6.* But he quickly felt his feet ſliding, and his mountain falling. Worldly men fancy and project to themſelves an everlaſtingneſs in worldly things *Pſal. 49. 11.* Babylon boaſts (*Revel. 18. 7.*) *I ſit a Queen*; ſhe doth not ſay, *I am*, but, *I ſit a Queen*, as if ſhe had ſaid, I am not only in an high place, but in a ſure place, I have a warm and a firm ſeat, I am well ſetled. *I ſit a Queen and am no Widdow, and ſhall ſee no ſorrow*, I feel no ſorrow, neither do I fear any, I ſhall have no changes. Preſumption makes the ſoul believe it foreſees, and therefore prophecies as great things as faith can. The Prophet Zechary (*Chap. 1. 11.*) hath Chriſt repreſented in a viſion, ſending out the Angels, thoſe heavenly ſcouts or intelligencers to bring him in a report, how things went in the world *Theſe are they (verſ. 10.) whom the Lord hath ſent to walk to and fro through the earth*, and what is the report they bring? *Behold all the earth ſitteth ſtill and is at reſt.* The earth of wicked men, did not only as they thought, ſtand faſt, but had ſet themſelves down ſoft and ſure, they thought themſelves ſitting upon down pillows for eaſe and ſoftneſs, and upon rocks of Adamant for ſureneſs and unmoveableneſs, they ſate ſtill and were at reſt, yea doubtleſs they ſaid in their hearts, who ſhall raiſe us up? Both the poſture and the confidence of literal Babylon was like that of myſtical Babylon; yet as old literal Babylon (though ſhe ſate ſtill and cloſe in her ſeat, yet ſlid and fell at laſt) ſo alſo ſhall myſtical Babylon. She that ſaid, *I ſhall ſee no ſorrow, ſhall ſee nothing but ſorrow.* Now if the feet of that great temporal monarchy did ſlide, and the feet of this ſpiritual mo-

narchy must, both which have had as sure footing as the world with all its wit and strength, policy and power, were, or are able to make, what then may the weaker and more uncompacted parts of the world expect. *There is no firm standing upon that which is unfirm*; if our foundation be unsure, our footing cannot be sure, moveable creatures will never put us into an unmoveable condition. The soul standeth fast in Christ alone, when we once fix upon him, we are fixed, our feet may slip or slide, I confess, though we are in him, but they shall not slip or slide from him at all for ever. *He that is ready to slip with his feet,*

Hic versiculus obscurus est. Mere.

Vox לִפִּיד p o- priè tadam vel facem significat non illud vasculum in quo ignis oleo nutritur

Aben Extra in

לִפִּיד *Lamech servile facit ut פִּיר*

fit calamitas idem quod אֵיךְ infortunium: ut hoc de se dicat per tertiam personam; sum ut qui est despectus in mente felicitis hominis ob afflictionem & calamitatem.

Tada despecta est tada consumpta quæ jam usui esse non possit ad præluendum. Dum prælucebat in pretio erat s. consumpta contemnitur. Mere. Lampas contempta propriè pro re vilissima & inuili habita proverbialis est locutio quo vnum nullius pretii significant Hebræi. Bold.

Is as a lamp despised.

The words of this text are somewhat dark, and there are not a few who make the *lamp* the darkest word in it. One of the Rabbins reads very differently. The word which signifies a lamp, he divideth into two words. *Lamech* prefixed is servile (as Grammarians speak) noting as much as *for*, or *because of*, and *pid*, destruction, calamity, or sorrow: So it is taken, chap. 31. 29. *If I have rejoiced at the destruction of him that hated me*, and then the sense is, as if *Job* in the third person had spoken thus, *I am as a man despised in the thoughts of him that is in prosperity, because of my afflictions*: But I shall not insist upon this translation of the word, which yields us this sense, though it stand entire under the notion of a torch or link, which are carried in the streets to give light, or (as we render) of a lamp, which is a Vessel, filled with oil, and fitted with wick, giving light in the house. Every one knows what a lamp is, but what is a despised lamp? a despised lamp, is a lamp whose frame is old, worn, batter'd and out of fashion, or whose oil is consumed. A lamp or a torch is very desirable in a dark night, but when 'tis day, or when the torch is burnt down to the last inch, and the lamps oil is spent to the last drop, then both are despised, who cares for either? So that, for a man to be looked upon *as a despised lamp*, is a proverbial speech, importing, that he is of no more value than a thing of naught.

A despised lamp is of the same signification with a smoaking firebrand. When the people of *Israel* were in a great fear, at the invasion of *Rezin* and *Remaliah's* son, and the heart of *Abaz* the King, moved as theirs, like the trees of the Forrest shaken with

with the wind, the Lord bids the Prophet, *say unto him, Take heed, and be quiet, fear not, neither be faint-hearted: What? not fear when such mighty enemies are coming against us: No faith he, fear not for the two tails of these smoaking fire brands* (Isa. 7. 4.) *Aha* and the Israelites lookt upon them, as the flame of a devouring fire that would burn and consume all, no, saith God, they are but as *smoaking fire-brands*, they are but brands ends, they have almost consumed themselves, they are smoaking rather than burning, they will soon go out. A *smoaking brand* is a proverb for that which is almost spent, whose violence you need not fear, it can do no great hurt, nor can it stand you in any stead. As *smoaking flax* in the Gospel (*Matth. 12. 20.*) notes the lowest degree of grace, which Christ will not quench nor put out, so a *smoaking fire brand* notes the least degree of hurtful power remaining, or malice vexed out; and a smothering lamp, the least degree of useful remaining power, or comforts wearied out. On the other side, a bright burning lamp, or the lighting of a candle, expresth the beginnings of honour and excellency, or our continuance in the enjoyment of them. (*Psal. 18. 28.*) *Thou wilt light my candle, the Lord my God will enlighten my darkness.* See what an office holy faith puts God unto; *David* believed that God would come and light his candle; what candle? his meaning is that the Lord would renew his estate, and chase away the darkness which lay upon it. *Thou wilt light my candle*; thou wilt cause me to shine clearly and fairly in the world, though I have been a while as a candle extinguisht, or burnt out. The Prophet sets the hoped and prayed for restoration of *Sion* under a like metaphor and allusion (*Isa. 62. 1.*) *For Sions sake I will not hold my peace, and for Jerusalems sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth.* That is, till the estate of the Church be beautiful and glorious. Now as a burning lamp is the emblem of a happy, so a dying despised lamp is the emblem of a miserable condition. For what's a broken dying lamp worth? what's the snuff of a candle worth? or a candle burnt down to the socket? of no more worth is many a gracious soul in the thoughts of worldly wealthy men, when once he hath lost the wealth of the world. Riches are to the reputation of man, as oil to the lamp, they feed and nourish it, they cause it to shine out with a resplendent brightness; but when riches

are consumed, a mans reputation consumes too, he is a despised lamp: Thus the intendment of Job is obvious, and may be drawn into this plain observation.

*Tempora si fu-
erint nubila
solus eris.*

That they whose estates are sliding and falling are subject to despising. Or more briefly thus, They who are afflicted are usually slighted.

*Nil habet infeli-
x paupertas
durius in se,
quam quod ri-
diculos homines
facit. Juven.
Sat. 3.*

*Contemptus est
ultima adversa
fortuna sarcina.*

Affliction subjects us to contempt. Christ appeared meanly in his out-side, he appeared in an afflicted condition, a man of sorrows (Isa. 53.) and what was the effect of this? He was despised and rejected of men (ver. 3.) and we hid as it were our faces from him, and we esteemed him not. Unhappy poverty (saith the Hea-then Poet) hath nothing in it more unhappy than this, that it makes men scorned and derided. A man emptied of riches is usually filled with contempt. They that slide should be lifted up, as the Law ordered concerning the Ass overburthened, and the Oxe fallen into a Pit; but when a man is fallen under the burthen of affliction, usually another burthen, the burthen of contempt is laid upon him, he is despised: while we are burning lamps shining with riches and greatness, we are lookt upon and sought to, but no sooner under a vail of want, but thrown by, and regarded no more.

This holds true also in regard of internal gifts and endowments; while a man hath great abilities and quick parts, he is as a lamp full of oil, or as a burning light: so John Baptist is described (Joh. 5. 35.) He was a burning and a shining light, and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light, all liked him very well, yea they even danced about him, as children about a bonfire (so much the word bears) for a season. The lamp of John's Ministry was always alike, burning and shining, his oil did not waste. 'Tis said indeed by John himself (Joh. 3. 30.) I must decrease, not that John did abate or lessen his light, but because a greater light coming, his light was obscured (as the Stars by the Sun) but not at all diminished: but though John's light was always alike, yet the Peoples delight in him was only for a season: Even they whose gifts are not at all abated, may yet finde a great abatement in the acceptance of their gift; how much more they (which is the case of not a few) whose gifts are indeed abated? *Many are as a burning and shining lamp a great while, but at last (according to the lamps motto) by shining they consume. Their oil spends, their parts impair, their gifts*

*Præluendo
pereō.*

gifts are deaded, *These are despised Lamps.* There are Lamps spoken of, *Matth. 25.* which Christ will despise. The foolish Virgins brought lamps, but they had no oil in them. Some make a great profession, and would be thought burning and shining lights, who yet have no oil, that is, no truth of grace. Lamps without oyl, Christ will despise: But he will not despise a Lamp because it is not gilded with riches and worldly honour, or because not filled with such or such a measure of gifts; that's the way the world goes, let a man have never so much oyl of grace and sincerity in his Lamp, never so much of God and of Christ in his Lamp, if he have not golden oyl in his Lamp, riches and fulness, rare gifts and great parts, he is despised, and cast off.

There is another reading of the words, take it thus; *A man that is as a despised Lamp by those who are at ease, is ready to slip with his feet,* that is, to sin: the words may bear this translation, without any strain to the Text, and with the advantage of another truth, which may be given you in this Observation,

Affliction laies us open unto temptation.

As holy David (*Psal. 73.*) was ready to slip with his feet into sin, by seeing wicked men stand so fast in honour while they sinned: So when a holy and righteous man sees himself dishonoured, he is ready to slip with his feet, to sin, and say, *I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency.* It is a temptation to be despised, and except the heart be very well settled, the feet will slide. When a hypocrite is despised, he not only slips in, but falls from that profession he formerly seemed to stand in; he casts off the waies of God, when he sees himself cast off by men. They who are well rooted and sound at heart may be sorely shaken, but the rotten hearted, and unsound are rooted up by the strength of this temptation. The third branch of this verse, shews us by whom the man ready to slip is despised, it is

In the thought of him that is at ease.

[*In the thought.*] The word signifies also *clear, or pure*, and by a metaphor it notes a thought, because thoughts are as the irradiations and beamings forth of the mind. And the word in special notes *joyful or delightful thoughts*; that sence makes the text yet more emphatical. A man compassed about with sorrow is despised

רַחֵם

Candidus, nigrus, per metaphoram, denotat cogitationes letas, quae sunt veluti radij animae.

in the joyful, or rather jolly thoughts of him that is at eaſe: a man at eaſe hath pleaſant and merry thoughts, & being full of theſe merry delightful thoughts, he deſpiſeth him who like an expiring Lamp, ſits ſobbing & ſmothering in ſad and ſorrowful thoughts.

Of him that is at eaſe.

1285
Quietus, tranquillus, & per Metonymiam ſecurus, inſolens, quod tranquillus homines ſecuros & inſolentes reddat.

Quiet, ſetled, and (as the word imports by a trope) inſolent and ſecure; eaſe doth uſually make men not only ſecure, but inſolent. *Be cauſe they have no changes, therefore they fear not God, Pſal 55. 19. It is ſeldome that their hearts are changed, whoſe e- ſtates feel no change. Civil changes occaſion ſpiritual: None are further from a ſpiritual change then they, who fear not God; and they who have no civil changes are very often far from fear- ing God. Jeruſalem had little eaſe a long time, but ſhe is promiſed it: Thine eyes ſhall ſee Jeruſalem a quiet habitation, or, an habitation at eaſe (Iſa. 32. 20.) Jeruſalem that now is hath been an unquiet habitation, full of troubles, toſt up and down, but at laſt God will make her a quiet habitation: Babylon hath been at eaſe a great while, but Jeruſalem ſhall have her turn to be at eaſe too.*

Iob ſpeaks indefinitely, He is deſpiſed in the thought [Of him that is at eaſe.] Let him be who he will, a good man or a bad man, he is apt to deſpiſe thoſe that are in great affliction. A godly man is not wholly exempt from this not onely unchriſtian, but unmanly paſſion. Iob ſpeaks here with an eye to his friends, whom, though he rebukes often very ſharply, as acting very ſin- fully, yet he did not judge as wicked. The beſt man at eaſe may not only be unſenſible of his brethrens afflictions, but in a de- gree ſlight the afflicted: Iob ſuppoſes his friends faulty in this, as if he had ſaid, you (my friends) are at eaſe and quiet, all things go well with you, I am a poor ſnuff, a conſumed Lamp, and you de- ſpiſe me, you make nothing of my ordinary ſorrows, and but light of my heaviſt burdens. A good man may fail thus farre for a time in his duty towards an afflicted friend, and though he fail not thus farre, yet he may come within the verge of this ſin deſpiſing. For we deſpiſe the afflicted, not only by reproaching them with our words, and villifying them in our thoughts, but by not lay- ing their afflictions to our hearts, and bearing a part in them, by a brotherly fellow-ſeeing. When we do not ſuffer with them,

them, we under-reckon them in their ſufferings.

Hence Obſerve,

Fiſt, *They who are at eaſe, whoſoever they are, eſpecially wicked men, are apt to deſpiſe thoſe that are in pain.*

Few feel any ſmart till themſelves ſmart, or any want till themſelves are empty. It is bad enough not to feel the ſmart or want of others, but it is farre worſe to inſult over it. Of ſuch David makes complaint (*Pſal. 123. 4.*) *Our ſoul is exceedingly fill'd with the ſcorn of thoſe that are at eaſe; and with the contempt of the proud.* And again, *The drunkards made ſongs upon me.* Wine puts the wit in tune for a prophane jeſt. When David was eating aſhes and drinking tears, he was deſpiſed by thoſe who did eat the fat & drank the ſweet, they cried out, *Where is now thy God?* *Pſal. 42. 3.* David profeſſeth concerning his enemies, (*Pſal. 35. 13.*) *When they were ſick, my cloathing was ſackcloth, I humbled my ſoul with faſting, and my prayer returned into mine own boſome;* that is, ſay ſome, though they got no good by my prayers, yet my own ſoul did: rather thus; I prayed often and much for them even from my heart; the returning of the praier, may ſignifie his frequent minding of them, and the *boſome*, both ſecrecy and affectionatenefs in prayer for them. Laſtly, we may read it thus, *Let my prayer return into my boſome*, that is, I wiſhed no worſe to them then to my ſelf, let me receive that of God for my portion, which I have deſired may be theirs; either of theſe interpretations ſhew Davids ſympathy even towards his enemies, which the next verſe (*14.*) clears yet more, *I behaved my ſelf as though it had been my friend and brother, I bowed down heavily as one that mourneth for his Mother.* Would you not believe if theſe enemies of Davids ſhould hear of any affliction befallen him, that they would be in blacks? See how they mourn (as we ſay) in ſack and ſugar (*verſ. 15, 16.*) *but in my adverſity they rejoiced, and gathered themſelves together. With hypocritical mockers at feaſts, they gnaſhed upon me with their teeth:* When they were a feaſting they were mocking; abuſive ſpeeches were as ſauce to their meat, and ſugar to their wine; and they would forbear a while to imploy their teeth at eating, that they might imploy them in reviling, *they gnaſhed upon me with their teeth.* The teeth ſpeak as well as the tongue: gnaſhing of the teeth hath a loud voice in it. The damned in hell ſhall gnaſh their teeth in ſorrow for pain, the pain which themſelves feel: and the wicked here

on earth, do often gnash their teeth in joy or scorn at the pain which others feel. The Prophet *Hosea* describes the temper of such intemperate feasters (*chap. 7. 5.*) *In the day of our King, the Princes have made him sick with bottles of wine*, that is, in the day of the celebration of the Kings birth, or coronation, or some of those great feasting festivals, the Princes made him drink more than did him good; and what did he then? He was then fit to do evil, and so he did, *He stretched out his hand with scorners*, that is, say some, he took up his cups, or put his hand to his cups, as often, as vile persons, scorners; use to do: or neerer to the point, *He stretched out his hand*, that is, he acted against goodness and good men, against justice and those who are just, even as *scorners* and contemners of justice, and goodness, of just and good men, use to do. Neither is it any wonder that men at ease are thus ready to despise the best of men in a low condition, seeing they despise even the most high God. They who serve their lusts cannot serve either God or man, but they can despise both. And their consciences seldome trouble them (whatsoever they doe) who have no trouble in their condition. *Jesurun waxed fat*, Israel was called *Jesurun*, either from *Iosher*, righteousness, because they had received righteous laws, or were called unto righteousness, or from *Shor* to look or see, because this people saw more of the glory of God, than any people under Heaven: yet even this *Jesurun* when he *waxed fat*, that is, rich and great, *then he kicked* (*Deut. 32. 15.*) Kicking is an act of contempt; and against whom did he kick? *Moses* tells us, *Then he forsook God that made him, and lightly esteemed the rock of his salvation*. If men at ease venture to despise God, they will not stick at men, least of all at men in their afflictions.

Secondly Observe,

It is very sinfull to despise those that are in affliction.

Job speaks of it not only by way of narration, declaring what was done, but by way of conviction, reproving what was done. If it be sinfull not to pity those that are afflicted, then much more to despise them. (*Amos 6. 4.*) *They lye upon their beds of Ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches, &c.* But they are not grieved for the affliction of *Joseph*; he speaks nothing of their rejoycing at *Josephs* affliction, or that they laughed and passed jests upon him, no, but they did not grieve, they did not pity him in his affliction, this was their sin: how sinfull

sinful then is theirs who despise the afflicted ?

There is another reading of this verse, which I shall only name. *He that is fit to guide the feet of others, is as a despised lamp in the thought of the rich who are at ease.* As if Job had said; they whose holiness is most eminent and exemplary, even leading men in holiness, are despised.

Lucerna contempta judicio hominis opulenti, qui idoneus est gressus dirigendis. Tyg.

Job having thus crossed Zophar's first assertion, representing the righteous as a despised lamp, whom his friend had compared to the morning light, or noon-day sun : he now proceeds to refute his second assertion, representing the wicked in fullest prosperity, and highest security, whose eyes, his friend had said, should fail, and whose hope he had compared to the giving up of the ghost.

Verse 6. *The tabernacles of robbers prosper, and they that provoke God are secure, into whose hand God bringeth abundantly.*

As if he had said, Friend Zophar thou hast affirmed, that the righteous man is as the shining light; I say, he is but a despised lamp? thou affirmest, that the eyes of the wicked shall fail, &c, but I have seen the tabernacles of robbers prosper, and they that provoke God secure.

He describes a wicked man, by sins against both tables. First, He sins against his neighbour by injustice; he is a robber, the tabernacles of robbers prosper : Robbery is a sin against the second table; and robbery is here mentioned by a *synecdoche* for all sins against the second Table. Secondly, He sins against God, he provoketh God, which is the breach of the first Table : and provocation of God is here mentioned by a *synecdoche* for all sins against the first Table. *They that provoke God are secure.* Though every sin against our Brother be also a sin against God, and we may provoke God when the sin is immediately or nextly against our Brother, yet God in the sins of the first Table is chiefly provoked; and those sins are immediately against God; therefore he putteth both instances. Take a man that breaks the first Table, or the second, take a man that cares not how he wrongs his neighbour, or how he prophanes the name of God, the one prospers, and the other is secure, therefore your position is false, that the eyes of the wicked shall fail, and that their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost,

The Tabernacles of Robbers prosper.

Tabernacula
i. e. quæ ad illos
pertinent uni-
versa.
 77W *Prædo*
nes, vastatores.

That is, the dwellings and families, the affairs & undertakings of robbers, they and all that belong unto them prosper.

Robbers are of two sorts, there are open and violent robbers who waſt, ſpoil and deſtroy all that comes neer them, and care not who ſees : ſuch are warlike robbers ; who bring power to doe, what they cannot do by juſtice. Such were thoſe warlike bands (and at them *Job* aims in this argument) of *Caldeans* and *Sabeans*, who ſpoiled *Job's* eſtate and Cattel. The uſual effect of warre is waſt and ſpoil ; it is ſaid of the Turkiſh warrs, *That where the grand Seignours horſe ſets his foot, no more graſs will grow*, he makes havock of all. By Robbers here we may underſtand firſt theſe boiſterous ſons of *Mars*, men of blood and violence, who make their will their law, and think they may do whatſoever they have power to do. God himſelf is called *Eliſhaddi*, the mighty God, he is mighty to ſave and mighty to deſtroy, he is able to lay all the world waſt when he pleaſeth, as he once did when the world diſpleaſed him. God can deſtroy as much as he will, but he will not deſtroy as much as he can. Theſe Robbers have their name from the ſame root, becauſe they uſe all their power to deſtroy ; They have a will to deſtroy as much as they can, but they cannot deſtroy as much as they will : If they could, the whole world muſt fall before them, if it will not fall down unto them.

Secondly, There are ſecret Robbers ; deceit and fraud commit Robbery, as well as power and force. Some Rob while they pretend to ſeek for right ; they ſue at law, hoping to pervert juſtice. Some are Rob'd, others are murdered by the law ; The law is a ſhadow to many lawleſs actions. He is a Robber that takes his neighbours right from him by pretence of law, as well as he that takes his purſe in the high way. Again others Rob ſecretly while they ſeem only to ſell. they ſteal, while they tell you you ſhall have a pennyworth for your penny. *Ephraim ſaid, ſurely I am become rich, I have found me out ſubſtance ; in all my labour they ſhall find none iniquity in me, that were ſin*, *Hof. 12. 8.* I have got a great eſtate, and I hope there is none in the world can tax me that I have done them wrong, *in all my labour they ſhall find none iniquity* : Who ? I wrong ! I ſteal or Rob ! not I ;

I have not stained my trading and commerce with any such foul fact; I confesse I have used some subtleties and sleights, I have a little helped my self by art, my calling is a mystery, and if I deal misteriously in it for my own advantage, who can blame me for that? I am sure none can charge me with any open wrong or robbery, *in all my labour they shall find none iniquity.* And it appears plainly that I have done no such thing, *for that were sin,* that is, punishment would follow such iniquity, whereas I thrive and prosper: *such sales they make who have sold their consciences.* To clear this fence, observe what the prophet saith in the former verse; *He is a Merchant, the balances of deceit are in his hand, he loveth to oppress:* When a buyer comes to him for a commodity he weigheth it out fairly in the balance; there's no iniquity; but there is deceit in the balance, or he hath a bagge of deceitful weights, thats iniquity. To deceive with weights is Robbery, as well as to take by force; a man may Rob with a pair of ballances or a meet-wand in his hand, as well as with a sword or pistol in his hand. Both or either of those Robbers may be understood here.

Lastly, Some in stead of Robbers, read, *Rich men.* Rich men are called Robbers, not as if a man could not be rich without Robbery (The blessing of God, not their wronging of men makes many Rich; A diligent hand, not a violent nor a fraudulent hand, enriches many) but rich men are called Robbers, because many, if not most rich men, are (in one of these fences) Robbers, or because Riches are always a provocation to Robbery, yea and a help to it. For as in one respect poverty is a temptation to Robbery, (*Prov. 30. 9.*) *Feed me with food convenient for me, lest I be poor and steal:* as poverty is a temptation unto stealing, so are Riches. He that hath power, hopes he may oppress, and go unpunished. Some durst not oppress but for the shelter of an high place. A Pirate taken at Sea, and condemned by *Alexander,* said unto him, *I am condemned for Robbing at Sea in a little Ship, but thou Robbest at Land all the world over, and art applauded:* There are more who Steal by reason of their abundance, then by reason of their want; what they have, gives them ability to Rob for more.

The Tabernacles of Robbers, whether of the one kind, or of the other, prosper. The Original signifies not only a thriving, but a peaceable condition: They and their Stolen goods lye (for a time)

Ex eo facile constat me non esse peccati reum, quod mihi bene est: Nam qui rei sunt eos Nemesis impune abire non sin- nit. Jun. in loc.

שלה

Qui evit, p. r. metaph. an. felix, saluus fuit.

time) as ſafe and quiet as a childe in the Mothers belly. The word bears ſuch a ſence.

Hence Obſerve,

Unjuſt men, men of violence may proſper for a while.

Robbers may enjoy proſperous ſafety, and ſafe proſperity. Having met with texts before about the proſperity of the wicked, I ſhall not ſtay upon it here, the next clause alſo giving further occaſion to touch upon it again. The ſecurity of thoſe who provoke God, is the ſame with the proſperity of the Robbers, and they who Rob men, provoke God; yet here to provoke God is a ſin of another claſſis, yea of another nature than to Rob men, Therefore I ſhall diſtinctly open it.

They who provoke God, are ſecure.

Here is the ſecond ſort or proſperous wicked men. They who break the ſecond Table, and wrong their Neighbours, *proſper*; they who break the firſt, and *provoke God, are ſecure.*

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*Movere, commo-
vere, irritare
ad iracundiam.*

Thy that provoke God.

The word ſignifies to move, or irritate: it ſignifies to move corporally and locally (*Job 9 6.*) *He ſhakeſh the earth out of her place.* (*Iſa. 23 11.*) *He ſhook the Kingdoms.* This word ſerves in both texts: And hence it is taken for paſſion or inward diſtemper againſt others (*2 King. 19. 28.*) *Because thy rage againſt me;* word for word, *because thou waſt moved againſt me:* ſuch a one (we ſay) was moved, exceedingly moved when he was in a rage and angry. They may be ſaid to move God, who provoke him, they attempt to put him out of temper.

To provoke God is more than to ſin againſt God, it is ſinning with an high hand, or with ſuch circumſtances, as exceedingly aggravate ſin. Provocation notes the higheſt act of diſpleaſure, and therefore that ſin which provokes is one of the higheſt. (*Pſal. 106 7.*) *They remembered not the multitude of his mercies, but provoked him at the ſea, even the red Sea.* The confluence or meeting together of many ſins makes up a provocation.

Such Sinners of the higheſt ſtature, Job deſcribes in this ſecure eſtate: *They who provoke God;* As if Job had ſaid, *I do not ſpeak of thoſe who ſin lightly, who trade in ſmall ſins, or ſin after the rate and courſe of ordinary men, that theſe only are ſecure; but they who ſin provokingly and boldly, they who ſend defiance*

Chap. 12. *An Exposition upon the Book of JOB. Verse 6. 201*

to heaven by sinning, even these live securely here on earth, These

Are secure.

5 The Hebrew is abstract, and plural; *They that provoke God securities, confidences, are to them:* As (Psal. 1. 1.) we read of the blessednesses of him that walketh in the Law of God; which we translate, *The man is blessed:* So here, *they that provoke God are secure, or, securities are to them that provoke God:* They sin against God every way, and they have security every way; they sin against God as much as they can, and they have as much prosperity as they will. All kind of security, is their portion, who commit all kind of impiety.

תְּהוֹת
Numerus plu-
ralis abundan-
tiam signifi-
q. d. Magna
securitas, &
vox originalis
can securita-
tem denotat
qua audaciam
& temeritatem
parit.

Hence Observe,

God sometimes gives them greatest worldly peace, who offer him the highest provocations.

Such as will not let God rest, God lets rest. Wicked men would throw God out of Heaven if they could; but he doth not throw them out of the earth, though he can. It is a wonder of patience, that God should let them have any ease, who do their utmost to weary him.

I shall here touch four grounds of this dispensation of God towards wicked men, in temporals.

First, The Lord gives them security, that they may have opportunity to shew themselves, and to bring out those cursed treasures of iniquity stored up in their hearts. If lust were alwaies pinched with poverty, and burdened with affliction: If lust were always in bands and chains, in prison and restraint, under the revenging hand of God, lust could not look like it self; nor discover what it can do. *There had never so much of the sinfulness of men appeared, if so much of the goodness of God had not appeared.* As afflictions draw out the graces of the Saints, so they keep in, and dead the corruptions of the wicked: Many corruptions cannot act at all, but in a warm sun: There are some I confess (unbelief, discontent, murmuring, &c.) which act especially in and frosty seasons, but most are stopt.

Secondly, 'Tis thus, as to discover what men are, so to make them the more unexcusable, for being what they are. What can they say for themselves, who have received so much good from the hand of God, and have requited him with so much evil?

D d

What

What plea can they make who anger God while he is giving them content; who while God encompasseth them with blessings, compass him about with their rebellions? Thou art unexcusable, O man, who makest such returns. When *Dives* in the parable begs for a drop of water, he is answered: *Son remember, that thou in thy life time hast had thy good things*; Dost thou call now for an abatement of fire and torment, who didst multiply thy sin as fast as thy comforts were multiplied? dost thou call for ease who diddest abuse all thy ease? He hath not a word more to say for himself, his next suit is for his Brethren, that they might not come into that place of torment, out of which he had no hope to escape. *Every mouth will be stoppt by these openings of the hand of God.*

Thirdly, Such dispensations are both the tryal and honour of the Saints. They will not venture into sinful wayes, though others thrive in them. They see some prosper by Robbery, others advanced by flattery; yet they will not set up those trades. This is an evedence that they love holiness for holiness sake, and hate wickedness (how prosperous soever it is) for wickedness sake. Sin is worse to them then hell. The blackness of that coal offends them more then the heat of it.

Lastly, God doth this, to keep the Saints while they are in the world (which is their proper way of living here) to a life of faith. If all Godly men should prosper and have peace, if all wicked men should suffer and be in trouble, if God should leave visible marks of his displeasure upon every one that provoketh him, and visible marks of favour upon every one that pleaseth him, men would live by sight, and not by faith. In the next life there will be an end of faith, God will then give every one his portion: then no man that provoked God impenitently shall be at ease; nor shall any smart who have sincerely pleased him. Tribulation and anguish shall be upon every soul that sinneth, and every soul that hath taken hold of Christ by faith, and walked in love, shall have life and immortality: every one shall feel what he is, and enjoy what he hath believed. *Heaven and Hell have all in sight, faith will have no work in either.* Here we must alwaies walk by faith, and then most, when godly men are cast down, and when they who provoke God are secure.

Into whose hand God bringeth abundantly.

As if he had ſaid, They take courage to *provoke* God through the abundance which he beſtows upon them. Thoſe treasures of good things which he brings into their hands, cauſe them to bring out thoſe evils which were treaſured up in their hearts.

Hence Obſerve,

Wicked men make the bleſſings of God ſewel for their luſts, and beat their outward comforts into the weapons of an unholy warre againſt him.

Their bread and their wine, their gold and their ſilver, their wool and their flax, do but feed and cloath, enrich and ſtrengthen their baſe corruptions. *Hof. 13. 6.* According to their paſture, ſo were they filled, they were filled and their heart was exalted; therefore have they forgotten me: When the heart is lifted up with the creature, it falls from the Creator, and that proves an occaſion of forgetting God, which ſhould be a means of remembering him. The ſmalleſt taſt of benefits ought to put us in mind of our benefactor. But they had put God out of their minds, while he was putting fat morſels into their mouths, and had filled them with his benefits.

Again, In theſe words, *Into whose hand God bringeth abundantly,* Job ſeems to have a ſpecial reſpect to the *Caldeans* and *Sabeans* into whoſe hands God put all his abundance.

Hence Obſerve,

What the worſt of men have, is of Gods giving, he puts into their hands.

Satan puts wickedneſs into their hearts, but it is God, who puts power into their hands; God puts the perſons and eſtates of others into their hands. They indeed aſcribe all to their own power and policies. So the King of *Babylon* (*Iſa. 14.*) boated, *by my hand and by my power have I done theſe things*, he forgot that he was an inſtrument in the hand of God, or that God gave thoſe nations into his hand. The Lord ſtaves himſelf from bringing afflictions upon his people by this argument, *Deut. 32. 27.* *Leſt their adverſaries ſhould ſay, our hand is high, and the Lord hath not done all this:* God would not put his people into their hand, becauſe he foreſaw they would not acknowledg it: but *ſacrifice unto their net, and burn incenſe unto their drag, as if by*

וְשֵׁל
Cujus, ſummi
poſſit pro
propter quā,
q. d. Deum ir-
ritant confiden-
tē ob ſummam
felicitatem
quam largitur
ijs. Merc.

them their portion had been fat, and their meat plenteous. Man is unwilling to own any beyond himself as the author of his enjoyments. He scarce accounts any thing worth the having, unless it be of his own bringing in.

Further, We translate, *Into whose hand God bringeth.*

Abundantly.

*In cuius manum
venire facit
deus, sc. omnia
animi sui vota.
Merc.*

The Adverb, *Abundantly*, is not in the Original, our translators adde it in a different letter, as an explication, to shew the bounty of God even to many of them who most designedly disobey him. Such receive not only enough to support their lives, but to satisfy their lusts. They have not only as much as they need, but as much as they desire. God brings Quails into their hands as well as Manna: yet he puts these into their hands not as *love-tokens*, but as *wrath-tokens*. And while the meat is in their mouths, the wrath of God falls, *yea abides upon them*. It is not alwaies a mercy to receive what we would. God brings abundance into their hands, who never had one drop of favour from his heart.

*Ei qui adduxit
Deum in manu
sua Arias
Mont.
Deum gestat in
manu sua, qui
facit sibi De-
um, quem habet
at in sua pete-
state, nolens
esse in manu
Dei. Coc.
Non placet
quod nonnulli
Hebræorum
hæc ad Idolola-
tras referunt.
Merc.*

There is another reading, which gives an intimation of that particular sin, whereby these secure ones had provoked God. They were such, as brought God in their hands, that is, *false worshippers and idolaters*: Such are well described by this periphrasis, *they bring God in their hand*; we render *into whose hand God putteth*, these render *who put God into their hand*. The Jewish Doctors are much for this sense, but it receives little approbation amongst the Latines, and I will not insist upon it: Yet this is a truth, *Idolaters put God in their hand*: True worshippers carry God in their hearts; Idolaters carry God in their hands, that is, they have a God of their own making; an Idol, an Image, is the work of their hands. He that worshippeth according to mans invention, hath his god in his hand. Again, false worshippers may be said to carry god in their hand, because they act as if God were in their power and dispose (or they desire he should be so) not they in his. The *Tyrians* chained *Hercules* to a post, that he might not depart their Country: Other of the Heathen would adopt or reprobate their Gods as they pleased; unlesse the gods pleased them, they should be no longer gods. This is to bring a god in the hand grossely, and openly: They do it closely and covertly, who are unwilling to be guided by his hand.

They

They who would bring God down to their wills, make laws for God, and they who make a law for God, act as if they had made God. *Every thing must receive the rule of its being, where it receives a being.*

JOB Chap. 12, Vers. 7, 8, 9, 10.

But ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee, and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee.

Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee, and the fishes of the Sea shall declare unto thee.

Who knoweth not in all these, that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this?

In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind.

JOB having checked the pride of his friends, in the four first verses of this Chapter; and opposed the opinion of Zophar, in the 5th and 6th; He in this context brings out his proof, which he takes as low as low can be, that so he might raise his conviction on the higher. He deals not with him upon the dictates of humane reason, or upon the authority of Scripture; but from the voice of nature, from the common cry and consent of all the creatures: He convokes a synod of beasts and birds, of senseless trees, and mute fishes, to give their suffrage for the determination of the controversie, betwixt him and his friends.

Differuntis O amici praeque de sapientia & potentia Dei, quod omnia creat & conservat, quasi hac mihi incognita essent, nam vobis tacentibus docent ne hac creatura. Mort,

Ask now the beasts and they shall tell thee.

As if Job had said, Friend Zophar, thou hast discoursed about the providence of God, as if it were all riddle or mystery, which none but learned men could teach, and none but men of extraordinary parts could understand; But surely thou needest not speak so high, or in the clouds, for as much as the beasts of the earth, the fowls of the air, &c. may be our masters to teach us the wisdom and power of God, though men should be silent. These have a voice, these have tongues like trumpets to proclaim a providence in ordering the world, and that God doth, both in heaven and earth, whatsoever pleaseth

him : And therefore though the wisdom of God be higher then heaven, deeper then hell, broader then the sea, and longer then the earth, though there is a wisdom of God, and much in all his wisdom, which no creature can comprehend, yet his wisdom receives testimony from every creature, and we need not make such weary and long journies to find out so much of it as concerns our instruction and satisfaction. Ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee.

Hence Observe,

All creatures have a teaching voice, they read us divinity lectures of Divine Providence.

*Non est ullum
animalculum
tam exiguum in
quo non plus
discere possimus
quam in omni-
bus sculptis,
pictis aut fufis
simulachris.
Lavat.*

*Seculum est
speculum.*

Species

Christians, who have not only reason but grace, may learn from creatures which have not so much as life or sence. Images made by man are teachers of lies, but the things which God hath made are teachers of truth. And hence it is that Christ himself taketh up parables from the meanest of the creatures to instruct his hearers. I confesse there is no knowledge like the knowledge of Christ, and of him crucified : The cross of Christ is the chief subject of holy study : As the Apostles resolve assures (1 Cor. 2.) *I determined to know nothing among you but Christ and him crucified.* All knowledge without the knowledge of Christ is but ignorance : Yet there is a usefulness of knowledge from natural things, as subservient unto spiritual. Grace in the heart of a believer improves common earthly objects to holy ends, as having a stamp of heaven upon them. *The world below is as a glass wherein we may see the world above.* They who cannot read other books may run and read this : It is the *Plowmans Alphabet*, the *Shepherds Kalender*, the *Travellers Perspective*, through which he receives the lively spices of infinite excellencies in God. We may meditate from the sun to the stone, from the cedar to the hyssop that groweth on the wall, from the Angel to the worm that creepeth on the ground, from all, from the least of these we may know much of the great God, & it is the scope of the Apostle (Rom. 1.) to convince those who do not. It is reported of one who had but little or no knowledge at all in arts and sciences, or skill in tongues, and yet was full of knowledge in heavenly things, that being asked, how he came by that knowledge, having not read books, He said he had a book which he read continually, which had three great leaves, *the Heaven, the Earth, the Waters*; the creatures contained in these, were as so many letters, out of which he spelled many mysteries, & comfortable truths. Though the

the creature is not able to lead us into a ſaving knowledge of the myſteries of Chriſt, yet it gives us ſuch advantages to know God, as will leave us unexcusable in our ignorance.

There are four things which the creatures teach us.

Fiſt, They teach us that there is a God, and much of that which God is, (*Rom. 1. 20.*) *The inviſible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly ſeen, being underſtood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead.* As faith ſees him that is inviſible, ſo ſence ſhews us him that is inviſible: Faith ſees God in himſelf, ſence ſhews us God in his works.

Secondly, The whole creation teacheth us ready obedience to the will of God; All creatures obey the law of their creation: *fire and hail, ſnow and vapours, ſtormy winde and tempeſt fulfilling his word, Pſal. 148. 8.* And if there be any ſtop at all, or interruption in their obedience, if they do not fully answer the end for which they were created, it is either to teſtifie or to puniſh mans diſobedience.

Thirdly, All creatures teach us dependance upon God. Things without life are expreſſed as putting forth acts of faith towards the living God. (*Hof. 2. 21.*) the earth cries to the heavens, and the corne, and the wine, and the oyl cry to the earth; there is an intercryng from the loweſt to the higheſt, till the cry come up to the moſt high God. The whole preſents us with an *elegant proſopopeia*, All the creatures ſtriving to do them good, to whom God had once betroathed himſelf in mercies & in loving kindneſs; yet all (in a chain of dependance) confeſſing their inability to do them good without help from God. The corn, and the wine, and the oyl would feed and reſreſh *Jezreel*, but then the earth muſt give theſe rooting, juice and nourishment; The earth is willing to do her office, and give out her ſtrength to theſe, that theſe might ſtrengthen *Jezreel*, but then the heavens muſt open their Treafury, and let down their rain, and heat, and influences into the boſome and bowels of the earth to make it fertile. The Heavens are ready to befriend the earth at her requeſt with theſe enriching dowries of rain, heat and influence, but the Heavens cannot ſend a ſhower, nor the ſun aray, till God gives commiſſion, and therefore they cry to God to *unbind the ſweet influences of pleiades, and looſe the hands of Orien*, that ſo, God commanding the Heavens, the Heavens may feed the earth, and the earth may feed the corn, the wine, the oyl, and theſe may feed *Jezreel*,
the :

the beloved ones of God. Thus *the eyes of all wait, or look up unto God, (Psal. 145. 15.)* that they may receive good, Such is the very manner of their subsistence as declares their dependance: they wait upon God, and shall not we?

Fourthly, the whole creation teacheth us, that there is somewhat more provided for us then we now enjoy. The Apostle makes that use of it (*Rom. 8. 19.*) *The earnest expectation of the creature, waiteth for the manifestation of the Sons of God;* But how can the creation have an earnest expectation? not that the creature is able to put forth such an act directly, for then it must have not only life, but reason and grace, but there is somewhat in the creature, not only like *expectation*, but like *an earnest expectation*; the creature stretcheth out (as it were) its head to look for these things, and is weary till it receives them: We know (saith the Apostle, *vers. 22.*) *that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.* Now if the irrational and inanimate creatures which have been tired out by mans sin, and made subject to vanity, by reason of mans vanity, if they live under an expectation, how much more should man himself? Shall lifeless creatures be restless in their present condition which our sin hath brought upon them, and shall we who are the sinners rest in that condition? Shall the world groan under a state of vanity, and shall we rejoyce and satisfie our selves in it? The beasts of the earth may teach us better, and the fowls of the air may instruct us to soar to a more heavenly pitch of spirit.

בהמות

*Petora campi.
Elephas dicitur
Behemoth numero plurali, a
vastitate corporis, quod
quasi a multis
jumentis compositus videatur.
* Patheticus
admodum est ille
modus loquendi in scripturis,
quando quis calum terram aut
animalia ratione destituta al-
loquitur, Bold.*

Ask now the Beasts.

The word *Behemoth*, signifies all sorts of beasts, whether wilde or tame; yet most usually those that are wilde and savage, such as will not come to hand: to take the word in that strictness, enlargeth the sence, as if Job had said, *The worst, the most unteachable of the Beasts, will teach thee, those Beasts which have nothing in them but cruelty and fierceness, but rage and ravening, will inform thee.* The Elephant, in this book, is called *Behemoth*, which word is in the plural number, as if we should say, *Beasts*, intimating the huge vastness of the Elephant, that he hath (as it were) many beasts summ'd up in him, there are *Behemoth*, or *Beasts*, in that one Beast.

Ask the beasts. * It is usual in Scripture to turn us to the irrational creatures, when we depart from, or act below reason.

To

To put a man to School to the beasts, implies beastly ignorance; *Ask now the Beasts, they will convince thee, or stop thy mouth.* The Prophet brings in the Lord bespeaking Heaven and Earth, (*Isa. 1. 2.*) *Hear O Heavens, and give ear O Earth, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me; So, Deut. 32. 1. Give ear O ye Heavens and I will speak, and hear O Earth the words of my mouth: Moses tells the people that the very Heavens and Earth shou'd shame them if they would not hearken.* Now as when at any time God appealeth to, or bespeaketh the Heavens and the Earth, and makes them his witnesses or hearers, it is to shame mans deafness and rebellion, as if inanimate creatures, were more ready to hear and receive instruction then man. So when he bids us go, or sends us to inanimate creatures, to hear them speak, it is to shame mans dulness, as if they were more ready to give instruction, then we to receive and entertain it. Thus *Solomon* sends the Sluggard to the Ant, *Go to the Ant, thou Sluggard: The little Pismire shall teach thee, there thou shalt learn a lesson of Laboriousness and Industry to provide for thy self and thine.* The Apostle saith, *He that provideth not for his own house is worse than an Infidel,* because the light of nature teacheth a man to provide for his house: But we may say, he that provideth not for his house is worse than a beast, worse than the creeping things of the earth, because the light of nature teacheth them to do so. *Go to the Ant, thou Sluggard, consider her wayes, and be wise. Isa. 1. 3. Go to the Oxe and to the Ass, O unthankful man, they will teach thee, The Oxe knoweth his owner, and the Ass his Masters crib; as the Prophet speaks to the Heavens and the Earth, he desires them for his Hearers rather than men; so he sends the people to the Oxe and Ass that they should be their Teachers, when they refused to hear him. Ask now the beasts, they are wise and learned enough to direct thee in this point.*

They shall teach thee.

These words carry a double figure in them, either a *Prosopopeia*, which is the imitation of a person, or the attribution of speech and reason, to things speechless and irrational: or a *Metonymy of the effect*, *Ask the beasts and they shall teach thee*, that is, study the beasts, and this knowledge is attained. Meditation is both the Daughter and the Mother of wisdom. They who have no

wisdom cannot meditate, and they who meditate shall have more wisdom. The creatures teach us when we think of them: they teach us, though not formally, yet virtually. They answer and resolve the question put to them, though not explicitly, to the ear, yet convincingly to the conscience: *Ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee.*

Hujusmodi interrogatio est mentis operatio quâ creaturarum perfectiones intuemur ac meditamur.

Tunc homo creaturas interrogat quando eas diligenter considerat, sed tunc interrogata respondent cum homo perspicit quod tanta ordinatio esse non possit nisi ab aliqua superiore sapientia dispensante, Aquin.

Docebit te, i. e. unaquæq; ex bestiis docebit te; cum nomini plurali adiungitur verbum singularis numeri distributio fit eorum quæ nomine continentur.
Musca perdit i. e. qualibet perdere sufficit.

So then, we ask the creatures, when we diligently consider them, when we search out the perfections and virtues which God hath put into, or stamped upon them: To set our minds thus upon the creature, is to discourse with the creature. *The questions which man asks of a beast, are only his own meditations.* Again, the creatures teach us, when we in meditation make out Collections and draw down a demonstration of the power, wisdom, and goodness of God in making them, or of the frailty of man in needing them, such conclusions and inferences, are the answers and teaching of the creature. It is an excellent passage of *Augustine*, to this purpose, in the 10th book of his *Confessions*, I put the question, saith he, *to the Earth, and to the Sea, and to the rest of the Creatures, and they gave me an answer.* Now if you would know what my question was, it was the deep intention and consideration I had in my heart about the creatures: And would you know what their answer was? their answer was that which I collected in my Meditations from their several natures, qualities, and properties. So then to ask the beasts, and to be taught of the beasts, is only in a serious and holy manner, to let out our hearts in Meditation; and every true conclusion derived from such a Meditation, is the voice and answer of the creature.

There is one thing further observable in these words, *Ask the beasts and they shall teach thee.* The Original is in the singular number; *Ask the beasts, himself shall teach thee.* It is usual in Scripture to put a plural and a singular thus together; though it crosses Grammar, yet it improves Divinity. *Eccles. 10. 1. Dead Flies cause the Oyntment of the Apothecary to stink;* the Hebrew Noun is plural, and the Verb of the singular number: The reason of this kind of speaking is to shew that any one of the number about which we speak, will produce the effect of which we speak: and so when he saith, *Dead Flies will corrupt*, it notes, that any one or every particular dead flie among flies, is enough to corrupt the most precious Oyntment. So when he saith *the beasts will teach*, putting beasts in the plural number to a Verb of the singular,

singular, it notes, that every particular beast, or every single creature is able to give instruction. And so the sense is stronger, Thou shalt not only be taught and instructed from the whole congregation and assembly of the creatures, or by laying them altogether in thy thoughts, but each one shall teach thee, every one by himself shall teach thee, the least as well as the greatest, the Mouse as well as the Elephant or the Lyon; the Shrimp as well as Leviathan; the Hyssop on the wall, as well as the Cedar in Lebanon; the Grass of the field, as well as the Oak of Bashan. So many creatures as are in the world, so many Preachers there are in the world, of the power and goodness of God.

And the Fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee.

This Clause is of the same sense with the former. The word *quo ambitu* signifies any thing that flies in the air, all winged creatures, both the greater and the lesser : The Eagle or the Sparrow, the Ostrich or the Flie : Thou hast swarms of Teachers, All these *quicquid per aerem volitat* can tell *includit.* thee : Yea not only so, But *Hinc*
וְכָל־הַבְּרִיָּה

ו Generali
suo ambitu
quicquid per
aerem volitat
includit.
Hinc
ו **ו**
palper & a ce-
leri motu.

Verf. 8. *Speak to the Earth, and it shall teach thee.*

The word imports a silent enquiry, or a studious Meditation upon, or about a thing : speak to it in thy heart and thoughts, or in thy deepeſt Meditations, as was explained before. There is a different Tranſlation ; Some render, not by a Verb, but by a Noun, and repeating the Verb, *ask*, out of the former direction, they give it thus, *Ask every Slip or Sprig which grows in the Earth, and it ſhall teach thee* : For the word *Shuah*, ſignifies a Branch or a Sprig, a Slip or a Plant, any thing that grows out of the earth. And ſo the ſenſe is carried thus, *Ask of the Beaſt of the earth, ask of the Fowls of the air, yea ask of every Sprig or Slip or Plant of the earth, and that ſhall teach thee alſo*. So that as *Job* before ſent him to the Beaſts and Fowls, ſo now he ſends him to Trees and Plants, that they alſo may be his Teachers. And yet he hath not done, here are more Maſters,

¶ **W** Notat
 quicquid è cor-
 de vel ore e-
 manat, medita-
 tiones, collo-
 quia, preces,
 nec non apud
 se meditationes
 aliosq; affectus
 mentales. **Bold.**
 Virgulum ter-
 ræ. **Pagn.**
 ¶ **W** Significat
 quemlibet fru-
 ticem arbuscu-
 lum aut herbans.
 Gen. 2. 5.

The Fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee.

The silence of Fishes is grown to a Proverb, *As mute as a fish.* How then can a fish declare? Fishes are so far from forming up words and sentences, that they cannot make a sound or the rudest noise; yet they have a speech, though they have no voice.

רנִי פִּשְׁכֵי מוֹלֶטֶת
Multiplicatus,
Instar piscium
auſtus fuit.

77 *Piscis* 77
 Multiplicatus,
 Instar piscium
 auctus fuit.

The Schollars of *Pythagoras* were enjoined silence for five or two years; here we have a sort of Tutors who are always silent. These say not much, while they say little; but they say much, though they can say nothing. A Fish is expressed by a word in the Hebrew, which signifies to multiply; and to increase as a Fish is an Hebraism for a great encrease (*Gen. 48. 16.*) The very multitude and encrease of Fishes, their huge shoals and innumerable numbers declare much to us.

I might insist largely upon these Teachers, and shew you how every creature hath a proper lesson for us, and what those lessons are, I will give but a touch.

If you ask the *beasts*, They will teach you to know and own God from whom you receive so much good, so many benefits. That lesson the Prophet calls the Jews to learn from the Oxe and the Ass, *Isa. 1. 3. The Oxe knoweth his owner, and the Ass his masters crib, but Israel doth not know.*

Go to the *Fowls of the aire*, and they will instruct you: 1. That God hath a care of his people, because he hath a care of them who are so much inferior to his people. Thus Christ supports our Faith, and scatters distracting cares (*Mat. 6. 26.*) Behold the *Fowls of the air*, for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into Barns, yet your heavenly Father feedeth them; are ye not much better than they? And as he takes care to feed them, so to preserve them, *A Sparrow falls not to the ground without the will of your Father, ye are of more value then many Sparrows*; therefore be not afraid at the approach of fear. Will not God take care of you who takes care of Sparrows? 2. The observation which the Fowls of the air make of their several seasons, teach us to keep time and season. The Prophet makes that use (*Jer. 8. 7.*) *The Stork in the Heaven knoweth her appointed times, and the Turtle, and the Crane, and the Swallow observe the time of their coming, but my people know not the judgment of the Lord.* When we see the Swallow coming in the Spring, and going away towards Winter; when we observe the Turtle and the Crane timing it so exactly, do they not teach us to know the time of Judgment, and the time of Mercy, when it is Winter, and when it is Spring, when it is warm, and when it is cold?

Look upon the earth, and learn, 1. The power of God bearing it up: It is marvellous, even miraculous, that the earth should hang upon nothing, that it should hang in the thin air, that

that it should hang there, where a tennis-ball, yea where a Feather will not stay without support. The earth hath nothing but the decree and power of God to bear it up. How doth this teach us the power of God, and the infinite strength of his decree! 2. The earth teacheth us what we are, and what we must be, *Dust thou art, and to dust thou shalt return.* Ask the earth and that will teach thee that thou art a brittle Creature: Ask the Grass of the earth and that will teach thee that thou art a withering Creature. *Isa. 40. 6. The voice said, Cry, and he said, what shall I cry? All flesh is Grass, and all the goodliness thereof as the flower of the field.* 3. The earth calls us to fruitfulness, when we are plowed, manured, and watered: and that they who often drinking in the Rain of Heavenly doctrine bring not forth Fruit, are near unto cursing, *Heb. 6.* Lastly, All the creatures teach us that special point which *Job* is upon, namely, *That the Tabernacles of Robbers prosper.*

For *Job* having said in the former verse, that the feet of the godly slide, or that they are trampled under foot, that Robbers are rich, and Oppressors prosper, he bids *Zophar* Ask the Beasts, the Fowls of the air, and the Fishes of the sea, whether it be not so or no. As if he had said, *Even Beasts and Birds teach us that it is thus among men: For are not the most innocent and harmless beasts torn, vexed, and devoured by the more cruel and stronger beasts. There is no desert in those, why they are advanced and prosper: Neither is there any fault at all in those, why they are destroyed and perish. The Fowls of the air teach this also; do you not see the greater preying upon the less: is not the innocent Dove gript in the talons of the ravening Vulture, and the poor Partridge by the Hawk? The sea gives us the same instruction, for there also the Sharks and Whales, &c. swallow whole shoals of smaller fishes. As there are beast-devouring beasts, and fish-eating fishes: So there are men devouring, men-eating men: There are civil Canibals in every Kingdom of the World, whose Tabernacles are glutted with prosperity.*

Again, The beasts and birds, &c. will tell you that the Tabernacles of Robbers prosper, if you put them this other question, *In whose possession are most of you? who is your Master? Come to the flocks of Sheep, and to the herds of Cattel, and ask, whose are ye? They will answer, such a wicked man is our Master, a Robber is our owner, an Oppressor is Lord of all these Flocks and Herds. Ask the Fowls of the air and the Fishes of the sea, to whose tables are ye most*
E e 3 *ordinarily*

Videbatur Zo-
phar ſapientiam
extra fines
rerum aſpecta-
bilum collo-
caſſe.
Merc.

ordinarily ſerved up? who feeds upon you? The fiſhes will ſay, we are carried up to the great mens Tables, the Robbers and Oppreſſors of the Earth feed upon us, we ſcarſe ever come to the poor mans Trencher, and but ſeldom (comparatively) to the good mans Trencher; the greateſt ſtore of us is ſpent out upon the wicked, the Tyrants of the earth glut themſelves with us, we ſatisfie the luſts, fat the backs, and fill the bellies of Oppreſſors. Ask the earth for whom it ſends forth Corn and Wine and Oyl, for whom ſhe gives out her treaſures of Gold and Silver, together with her rich materials for Ornament and Cloathing. The earth will tell you, moſt of my delicacies are ſwallowed down by Robbers; my ſilks and ſcarlets, my gemms and precious ſtones, cloath and adorn the backs of Robbers: Thus paſs through every ſpecies of the Creation, and all return this answer to the queſtion in hand, *The Tabernacles of Robbers prosper.* Thus your thoughts may travel through all the creatures, and receive particular inſtruction from them. Zophar ſaid, chap. 11. 7. *Canſt thou by ſearching find out God?* Yea, ſaith Job, I can find him almoſt without ſearching, every thing I ſee ſhews me God. I need not go to the heights of Heaven, or the depths of the Sea, as if the knowledge of God were not to be had within the bounds of the viſible Creature: whereas indeed every created form, informs us of the Creator; and every object we ſee, is as a Teacher to the ear. The Apoſtle James gives a Caution (chap. 3. 1.) *My Brethren be not many Maſters:* Which we may underſtand either thus, be not Magiſterial and Cenſorious (as if every one of you had many Maſters in him) towards your brethren: or thus, let not every one take upon him to be a Teacher, or (as ſome) to be a whole univerſity of Teachers. For as it is ſaid, that *there are more Phyſicians than ſick Perſons:* Every man almoſt will venture to preſcribe a Medicine. So we may ſay, there are more Maſters than Schollars; There are more who think themſelves able to teach, then who are convinced that they have need to learn. Thus the Apoſtle would not have us to be *many Maſters:* Yet we ſee God hath provided us *many Maſters,* even as many as there be Beaſts in the field, or Birds in the air, as many as there be Trees and Graſs growing upon the earth, and Fiſhes moving in the Sea.

Hence take theſe two Corollaries.

Fiſt, We who have had ſo many Teachers, that we might know God and glorifie him as God, ſhall have as many condemners if we do not.

Secondly,

Secondly, If they ſhall be without excuſe who know not God by the teaching of the creatures, how inexcusable will they be, who know him not in Chriſt, who is taught and preached every day?

But the points of holy Learning which Job eſpecially intendeth, are expreſſed in the two next verſes.

Verſ. 9. *Who knoweth not in all theſe, that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this? &c.*

As if he had ſaid, Though there are manifold Leſſons to be learned from the Beaſts, and from the Fowls, and from the Fiſhes, yet I call you in a ſpecial manner to learn that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this, and that all theſe things are in the hand of the Lord.

There are two points in theſe two verſes which Job calls us to learn.

1. *The work of Creation, verſ. 9.*

2. *The work of Preſervation or Providence, verſ. 10.*

The work of Creation, *Who knoweth not in all theſe, that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this?* And if the hand of the Lord hath wrought them all, then the hand of the Lord doth diſpoſe them all too; which is the Argument he was upon.

Who knoweth not.

That is every one knoweth this, or every one may know from the works of the Lord, that the hand of the Lord hath wrought them.

That the hand of the Lord.

Why doth he ſay, *The hand of the Lord*? Was it not the word of the Lord that made the world? The Lord ſaid, *Let there be Light, and let there be Earth, and let there be Seas, and let there be Graſs,* and all things were ſo, how doth he ſay here, the hand of the Lord hath wrought them? I anſwer, the hand of the Lord, is no more than the word of the Lord; *the hand of the Lord is the Power of the Lord, and the word of the Lord is the power of the Lord too*: Only, here he ſaith that the hand of the Lord made them, to note, that the Lord made them immediately. *The hand of the Lord* put to a work, noteth his immediate work. *Who knows not that the hand of the Lord hath wrought theſe things?* that is, that the Lord without any help or aſſiſtance, hath

hath set up this mighty frame of Heaven and Earth, that he alone hath provided and prepared all those vessels, which furnish it for the use and accommodation of the sons of men.

Who knoweth not in all these?

That is in one as well as in another. The lowest as well as the highest works of God, shew that God wrought them. Some pieces and parts of the World, are more excellent than the rest, but there is enough in any one of them to speak out who made it.

Hence Note,

First, *God alone made the World.*

Creation had but one hand in it. The hand of the Lord hath wrought. *Every work of providence hath the hand of God in it, and some the hand of God only.* But in Creation the supreme cause was all the cause, that knows nothing either of subordinate causes or of instrumental. Some have asked, with what tools or instruments did God make the Heavens and the Earth? with what Ladders and Scaffolds did he build so many stories, and after set up the Roof over all? *Job* answers these fools, *Who knoweth not that the hand of the Lord hath wrought them?*

Secondly, *The Lord hath so made all, that the very things which he hath made, proclaim that he made them.*

Naturalis Theologia.

Socius negat

naturaliter ex

animadversâ

mundi machinâ

Dei existentiam

ex provi-

dentiam colligi,

sc. ut absurdum

non sit esse mun-

dum ex nec esse

Deum ex

providentiam

netripe quia

prostantissimi

Philosophi non

agnoverant.

Coc.

Who knoweth not in all these? or, *from all these.* Many works of providence are so done, that man cannot so much as be suspected to have done them. God doth like God; He needs not subscribe his name to his work, for *that his name is near, his wonderful works declare,* it must be said by way of affirmation, *This hath God wrought;* as well as by way of admiration, *What hath God wrought!* Now, if providence (wherein usually man acts with God) act so much above man, that the whole is ascribed to God: how much more doth Creation declare it self to be the sole work of God? *Who knoweth not in all these, that the hand of the Lord hath made them?*

But it may be objected, To understand that the world was made, is the work of Faith, How then do we know it from all these? or how do the creatures demonstrate their Creation? Saith not the Apostle, *Heb. 11. 3. Though Faith we understood that the Worlds were framed by the word of God so that things which are seen, were not made of things which do appear?* I answer, Faith

Faith gives the highest understanding of these things, and there is somewhat of these things which we cannot understand but by Faith; yet the very creature doth demonstrate a Creation. A Christian knows in a higher way than a Philosopher, yet a Philosopher may know that by reason, which a Christian knows by Faith. A Believer is in a higher form, and hath a higher light than a Philosopher, though both learn the same lesson.

And this doth more convince, not only Atheists, who deny that there is a God, *Who hath wrought all these*: but those also who improves not the works of God: for though we give God the greatest glory when we understand by believing, yet we may understand this principle by reasoning. The Creature well viewed by a natural eye, tells the understanding, that a Divine power once created, and still ordereth all these things.

Hence thirdly observe, in reference both to Creation and Providence,

That the Lord doth not only the greater thing but the lesser.

Psal. 145. 6. Whatsoever is in Heaven, Earth or Sea, *He hath wrought them all.* When the Primitive Christians were under the heat of Persecution, they lived upon God under this Notion. *Act. 4. 24.* *Thou art God which hast made Heaven and Earth and the Sea and all that in them is*: for hence it followes, that he takes care of all providence is as large as Creation. It was an ancient Heresie, that, but some of the creatures, or the best of them, were made by God, and that, the more troublesome and worst, were made by the Devil. To which purpose that story is famous, reported by *Austine*, in his first *Treatise upon John*, concerning a *Manichee* that argued with an Orthodox Christian against the Creation; who having perswaded him, that God never troubled himself to make little flies, upon that confession caused him to confess that he made not the Bee, the Locust, and smaller birds; having got this advantage, he leaves not his Sophistry, till he forced him to confess that God made neither the Oxe, nor the Elephant, nor man himself. The truth is, if we do not give God glory in making the least of Creatures, we shall quickly be drawn to deny him glory in making the greatest. As it is in sinning, if we make not Conscience of committing the least sin (I do not say that if we commit a little sin, we shall presently commit a great one) but if we commit it out of this opinion that it is no great matter, if once we admit of a little sin upon the ground, it will

F f

quickly

August. Tract. 1. in Joh.

Cum orthodoxus muscam dixisset a diabolo factam, compulsi fateri eum Manichaeus ab eodem factam ap. m, locustam, lacertam avem bovem, Elephantem, hominem.

quickly bring the conscience to swallow the greatest. 'Tis so about the works of God, if we deny his power in the work of Creation, or his wisdom in the work of providence about the least creature, we shall quickly grow to a kind of Atheism, and deny or at least not hold forth with power the work of God in any of the creatures, or that *His hand hath wrought them all.*

Vers. 10. *In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind.*

The hand which made all, keeps all that he hath made in his hand. The former verse holds out the Creation, and this the conservation of the world.

In whose hand.

The hand is put for power, and to be in the hand of God, is to be in the power of God.

Hence Observe,

The same power that made the World, preserveth the World.

Si creatura a deo facta sunt manifestum est, quod in dei potestate sunt sicut artificata in manus artificis Aquin.

When men have done their work, they put it out of their hands; we usually say, such a thing is in, or under my hand, that is, it is a doing, I am at work upon it; but as soon as we have done our work, we say, such a thing is out of my hand, that is, I have done with it: Man cannot hold his work always in his hand, but God doth. And there is a necessity that he should. The world would presently run out of its being, if it were not upheld by the same hand which at first gave it a being: when man sinned the world had ruined, if Christ (by whom all things were made, Job. 1.) had not stepped in to be the stay and prop of it, by him all things consist, Col. 1. 17. He upholdeth all things by the word of his power, Heb. 1. 9. He is that powerful word which made all things, and he upholdeth all things by the word of his power; we owe the standing of the world as much to Christ as we do the Creation of it. *In whose hand*

Is the Soul of every living thing.

VER.
Anima qua vivitur cum sensu & sensibili appetitu spiritus hominis qua vivitur cum consilio voluntatis. Omnis anima est in manu dei, quia ut produci- ta ab ipso habet conservari. Janf. in loc.

The Hebrew word signifies not only the soul of man, but of any creature that breatheth, or the breathing of any creature. And it is put for the whole *compositum*, the body and the life. Every living thing dyed; So Moses speaks of the flood. God put their lives out of his hand into the hand of the merciless waters:

Yea

Yea not only men and Beasts, and Birds, &c. but Trees and Plants, the Grass in the Field, and the Flowers in your Gardens, live by the power of God: The Trees in Winter are as dead, their Leaves fall off and their Fruit is gathered, the Fields are unclothed and naked: but when the Spring comes, Grass comes, Trees bud and bring forth fruit again, shall we ascribe this to the Sun? shall we go no further than the season for this? and say, the Spring is come, and therefore the Grass comes? No, *In his hand is the Soul of every living thing*: there is a life in the Grass, and it is of God that the Grass grows, that the trees blossom and bring forth. *In his hand is the Soul*

Of every living thing.

Sometimes the word is restrained to man, *Gen. 2.* Eve the first woman, was so called, because she was the Mother of all living, yet she was the Mother only of *living man*. Some take it so here, implying that the Lord who made all Souls, hath the Soul of man especially in his hand, but we need not restrain it thus; seeing the last clause of the verse speaks expressly of the care of God towards man: *In whose hand is the Soul of every living thing,*

And the breath of all mankind.

Or, *The spirit of all mans flesh*, So Mr. Broughton reads it; Breath and Spirit are often used promiscuously, and *Ruah* signifies both.

Here 'tis taken for the breath or breathing of man, which is but an act of life. *In whose hand is the breath of all mankind.* Daniel makes report to Belshazzar (*Dan. 5. 23.*) what God had done for his father Nebuchadnezzar, in what great glory he had set him up, &c. and then reproves him, *The God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified.* The God in whose hand thy breath is, Belshazzar was a great Prince, the greatest Monarch at that time upon the earth, he commanded all, he had the breath of many in his hand, as Daniel there speaks of his father, whom he would he slew, and whom he would he kept alive, such was the power of that great Monarch; but then he minds him, that he was not Lord of his own life, *Thy breath is in the hand of God*, if God will, he can keep thee alive, and if God will he can take away thy life. It is true of God in the

רוח
Spiritus est flatus, seu respiratio universae carnis.

fulleſt extent. *Whom he will he ſlays, and whom he will he keeps alive.*

It is the comfort of our lives that our lives, are in the hand of God. *That which is in his hand, is in a ſafe hand.* It is not in the power of all the world to take away one life which God will keep. As the ſafety of the Soul in the ſtate of grace lies in this, that it is in the hand of God, as Chriſt argues in the 10th of *John*, *Ye are in my Fathers hand*, that is, your ſpiritual eſtate is in his hand, and *my Father which gave you unto me is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck you out of my Fathers hand.* Here is the ſafety of the Saints; and that's the priviledge we have under the Covenant of grace by Chriſt, beyond what we had under the Covenant of works in *Adam*. Our ſpiritual life was then in our own hand, now it is in the hand of God. Here alſo in its proportion lies the ſafety of our natural life, it is in the hand of God, God hath not only taken the life of our ſouls into his own hand, but the life of our bodies too; he diſpoſeth of lives as he pleaſeth, he can ſay to one in a day of common Calamity, *Thou ſhalt have thy life for a prey*, and to another, *Thou ſhalt die by the Sword*, &c. What can we ſay in theſe times of death, when the breath hath gone out of many thouſands; Why hath it not gone out of our bodies? No other account can be given but this, Our breath is in the hand of God; were it not ſo, the breath of many of us had not been in our bodies at this time.

Further, It ſhould teach us to honour that God, in whoſe hand our breath is. *Daniel* checked *Belſhazzar* becauſe he failed in this, *The God in whoſe hand thy breath is, haſt thou not honoured.* How careful are we to pleaſe thoſe who have our eſtates in their hands: We reſpect him alſo very much in whoſe hand our health is: But if our life be in the hand of another (as ſometimes it is) how do we ſtudy and ſtrive to comply with the commands, yea with the very humours of ſuch a man. Shall we not honour God in whoſe hand our breath is?

Laſtly, If our breath be in the hand of God, it teacheth us, that the time of our death, and of the going forth of our breath, is ſet down and diſpoſed by God. Sometimes a ſickneſs endangers our life and threatens to ſtop our breath preſently; but God ſaith, no, it ſhall not be. Sometimes outward violence invades us, but a *David* comforts himſelf, *Our times are in Gods hand*; And as none can take away life if He will continue it, ſo none can continue life, if

He

He will take it away. If God send for our breath (how unwilling so ever we are to part with it) it must come. One of the Ancients bespeaks a wicked man thus, *Thou hast thy breath in thy Nostrils, and thou art unwilling to let it go, but if God speak the word thy breath will go.* Again (saith he) *When God shall reunite these two, thy body and thy breath, and cast both into Hell together, he will hold thy breath in thy body whether thou wilt or no;* Here is a double punishment he will fetch thy breath out of thy body when thou wouldst keep it, and he will keep thy breath in thy body, when thou wouldst be separated from it. Thou shalt dye when thou wouldst live, and thou shalt live when thou woest death, and desirest to be dissolved, yea to be annihilated.

This also administers comfort to the Saints, that as when their breath goes forth, Gods hand leads it forth, so that hand of God will preserve their breath for ever. He gives them eternal life, and that is in his hand; *He can lengthen out life to all eternity in whose hand life is.* He that gives us a life of span long, can give us life Eternity-long.

Thus we have seen *Jobs* first argument from the Creatures, all which acknowledge God their Maker, God their Disposer, and Preserver; they have their being, and their well-being, together with the changes and continuance of both from him.

J O B Chap. 12. Verſ. 11, 12, 13, 14.

Doth not the ear try words? and the mouth taſte his meat?

With the ancient is wiſdom, and in length of dayes, underſtanding.

With him is wiſdom and ſtrength, he hath counſel and underſtanding.

Behold he breaketh down, and it cannot be built again: he ſhuteth up a man, and there can be no opening.

THE knot of Connection which ties theſe words to the former, lies ſo cloſe, that many have been troubled to find it out.

Agitur de creatoris cognitione percipienda ex creaturis experimento rerum ſenſibilium, quæ per illos duos ſenſus guſtum videlicet & auditum ſignificantur Aquin placet etiam. Sanct.

First, It is conceived by ſome, that *Job* having in the former verſes, the 7th and 8th, called his friends to read the book of Nature; *Ask now the beaſts and they ſhall teach thee, &c.* Turn over all the leaves of that great Volume, the world, and they will be inſtruction to thee. He now purſues the ſame point, and tells them that it would not be unprofitable for them, or loſt labour, if they in purſuance of his counſel ſhould ſet upon this ſtudy; *For the ear tryeth words, and the mouth taſteth his meat*, that is, every ſence will give them information about its proper objects, and ſhew the peculiar end of its inſtitution: he inſtanceth in two ſences, Hearing and Taſting by a *Synechdoche*, for all the reſt, as if he had ſaid; Each power and faculty with which the nature of man is endowed, will be a contributour towards the attainment of this knowledge; and declare that the wiſdom and power of God is eminent and conſpicious in the creature. And becauſe old men have heard many words, and have taſted many meats, that is, have had long experience of things, therefore he addeth in the 12th verſe, *With the ancient is wiſdom, and in length of dayes, underſtanding*, they who have run the longeſt courſe in the world, and have ſeen the greateſt variety of changes muſt needs know moſt of God, becauſe every change holds forth ſomewhat of God.

Secondly, The Connection appears to others thus; as if *Job* would here again meet with that opinion which his friends (*Zophar* eſpecially) had more than once inſinuated, that the doctrine

doctrine which they were upon and had taught him, was a deep mystery, and very hard to be understood, that it was (which some now glory in, *Theologia cryptica*) *Divinity in the Mystery*. No, saith he, there is no such matter, the point you are upon is very plain and easie, you need not make so many preambles, as if it were all under a Vail, or within a Curtain of secrecy (as was hinted in the former Chapter) for the things are plain. As the ear tryeth words, and the mouth tasteth meat, so it is here, these things are as obvious as sensible objects to the senses; we may learn them by ordinary hearing, which is the use of the ear, and by common experience, which is imported by the taste.

Thirdly, That *Job* refers to his own doctrine, As if he had said, I have held forth my opinion concerning the dealings of God with just men. And the truth I have maintained is as plain and easie to the understanding, as Sounds and Languages are to the ear, or as Meats unto the mouth. For as the understanding is to things rational and speculative, so are the senses to things external and sensitive, the Palate to Meats, and the Ear to Words.

Fourthly, That *Job* being about to lift up the Name of God, to speak out his Glory in the attributes of his power and wisdom; and that God by his absolute sovereignty over all Creatures; may afflict or prosper, do good or evil as he pleaseth; doth here preface or premise this general commendation of his wisdom, that God doth as exactly apprehend all that is done or spoken in the World, as the ear of a man tryeth the words of him that stands next him, whether they be true or false, for him or against him: or as the Palate tasteth meat, whether it be sweet or bitter, liking or loathsome; all the ways of the Children of men are before the Lord, he discerns the voyce of all their actions, and the language of every mans life: he knows whether their works be sweet or bitter, whether good or evil. The Psalmist speaks neer the language of this Interpretation, (*Psal. 94. 9.*) *He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see?* God is elsewhere said to have eyes, which try good and bad, He is here spoken of as having ears discerning truth and falsehood. And his ears are so quick, that they take in the least whisper, the stillest voyce; there is not a word spoken, but the voyce is heard by God: *He hears our silence, as well as our speech, and can tell what we say, when we say nothing*

Divina sapientia omnia quæ loquuntur cogitantur aut fiunt ita cognoscit quasi illorum audiret voces, quod aurium est aut gustaret sapores quod sanctus est Sanctus. Sensus percipiunt sonos, sapientia, &c. Nonne oportet deum qui hæc dedit universum esse. Coc.

thing. He hears the voyce of our thoughtss, our thoughts are as loud in the ears of God, as a Trumper in our ears. God hears the voyce of our actions, though we utter no words, *The voyce of thy Brothers blood cryeth*, thou hast done a bloody deed and that hath a voyce, a crying voyce (*Habbak. 2. 11.*) *The stone shall cry out of the wall*, the Lords ear hears the voyce of all creatures, even of those that cannot speak; he can do what he pleaseth, and he is as clear in all he doth, as the ear is in trying words, or the taste in discerning meats.

Every excellency in the Creature is in God by way of eminency. Doth the ear of man try words? then the ear of God doth much more? Doth the mouth of man taste meat? Much more doth the Lord taste men? Hence he sometime speaks distastfully of men, they are represented as a burthen to his stomack, and he as ready to spue them out.

*Sociis taxat
quod non dili-
genter expend-
rent a se dicta
q. d. vestrum
sane erat pur-
gatum aurum
differre non me
carpere, &c.
Merc.*

Further, The words seem to carry a reproof of the rash and inconsiderate judgment of *Jobs* friends about what had been spoken. This Exposition may be taken two ways. Either

1. In reference unto what *Job* had offered.

You have heard my judgment about the dispensations of God before, and I have spoken it a second time, *That the Tabernacles of the wicked prosper, that many a godly man is as a despised Lamp*: Now, Doth not the ear try words? Doth not the mouth taste meats? As if he had said, You have not yet weighed nor considered what I have proposed, if you had, I should not have needed to come upon this point the second time; you have been rash in your judgments, your ears have not done their office, you have not pondered my speech nor the arguments and reasons which I have produced in confirmation of my opinion.

Or secondly in reference to what *Jobs* friends had offered. As if he had said, You have declared many things to me, and you think that I have taken no notice of them, but I assure you I have my ear hath as exactly tryed your words, as the Mouth or Palate of a man tasteth meats.

Taking it thus, we may best read the words comparatively, (as we find them *Chap. 34. 3.*) *The ear tryeth words, as the mouth tasteth meat.* Thus the sense is most clear. Hearken diligently to my words, and then you may understand my meaning as distinctly as your taste doth what you eat.

The word which we translate try, signifies *exaēt tryall*, a perfect exploration. The ear is the chief Instrument of the understanding the sense of discipline. Here Job speaks not only of the outward eare, but of the ear as it acts with the understanding, which not only hears the sound of words, or knows the English of them, but discerns the meaning and scope of them. This Job especially intendeth, when he saith, *The ear tryeth words.*

Observe,

The ear must do more than hear, in hearing it must try what it beareth. He puts that which is properly an act of the understanding upon the ear, which is but an outward sense, namely to try the truth or falshood of those things that are spoken. The Original word for an ear (represents us with this duty of the ear) being in the dual number signifies a pair of ballances, to note, that when we are hearing, we should be weighing; we should put every word into the scales as we receive it. Doth not the ear try words? When you have received a peece of gold you try it, and there is a double tryal, a tryal by the Touchstone, and a tryal by the Balance. Every one that doubteth will go to the Touchstone to try whether it be good mettall or no, and he will go to his ballances and try whether it be weight or no. Thus when words are spoken they should be tryed, tryed by the touchstone and balance of the Sanctuary. An attentive ear, and a holy understanding will never put them among our treasures of knowledge or leading principles, till they have brought them to this tryal.

The point layes a just reproof upon those who hear many words, but try none. It is said of the Bereans (Act. 17.) that when an Apostle spake they tryed his words; they might have trusted Paul as soon as any man alive, that he would not put any false coin upon them, that he would not speak a word that wanted a grain of weight, yet their ears would try the words of Paul, though he spake by inspiration immediately from heaven, though he had an infallible Spirit. If this duty were observed, if hearers would try words, so many light pieces, light doctrines, which bear no weight in the ballance of the Sanctuary, would not be purged up, and put in among our treasures. Many make treasure of light and erroneous doctrine, of base coin, and counterfeit money: The reason is, Because the ear doth not try, the understanding and ear joyn not together, Psal. 62. 11 God hath spoken once, and twice have I heard it; that is, he heard it with his

כחץ Probare tentare, pe-
nitens explo-
rare, & dili-
genter expen-
dere.
Aurem non ex-
ternam tantum
intellige s. d. &
internam i. e.
exactum judi-
cium quod ijs
quæ audiuntur
est adhiben-
dum, merco:
Aurium &
Statera idem
est nomen in
Hebræo,
duæ enim au-
res sunt ve-
lut balances
quibus expen-
duntur quæ au-
dimus.

outward ear, and he heard it with his understanding. He duly weighed what God spake. Thus you must do if you will hear to purpose, be it who will that speaks, hear it once, and hear it again; that is, hear it with a sensitive ear, and hear it with an intellectuall ear, judge of it and try what it is. Our Saviour Christ cautions us to *take heed how we hear*, though to hear be a natural act, yet there is an artificial hearing, there is an heavenly art in it. *The ear must be taught by the Spirit to hear, or else it can never hear what the Spirit saith.*

Secondly, Observe,

No doctrine ought to be rejected untill it be tryed.

As none ought to be received till it be tryed, so none to be rejected, *Job* taxeth his friends, that they out of prejudice had cast off what he had spoken. Doth not the ear try words? Why have you not done me that right, as to examine the things I have spoken, before you censure me? You slight and contemn me, as if I were a man distracted and out of my wits; as though my words were not worth the weighing. *It is as dangerous to refuse, as to receive what we have not examined.* For, however a doctrine may be worthy to be rejected which we do not try, yet we do not our duty to reject it before we have tryed. As we say of a Judge, he that judges a man before he hears him, though possibly the sentence which he passeth may be just, yet the judge is unjust; so it is in this case, if we reject a doctrine before tryal, though possibly it be worthy to be rejected, yet we are worthy to be reproved for rejecting it. We erre in laying aside an error, before we have found it to be an error. The best that can be said of such, is, that they have done well by accident. And as they need pardon who do evil, though they know it not, so they having nothing to boast of, who refuse that which is evil before they know it to be so. The Apostle gives that rule (1 *Thes.* 5. 21.) when he had said, *Despise not prophecyings*, be diligent in attending the means; he adds, *Prove all things, and hold fast that which is good.* As we must not reject or refuse to hear the Word, so we must not receive every word we hear, *but try all things and hold fast that which is good.* Doth not the ear try words?

And the mouth taste his meat.

The Hebrew is, *Doth not the palate taste his meat?* There is a dispute among Philosophers what is the proper sensorium or instrument

Instrument of tasting. Most give it to the whole *mouth*, some to the *palate*, others to the *tongue*, not a few to the tip of the *tongue*; there is a fifth opinion which ascribes it to the *nerves* which diffuse themselves, quite through the *tongue*; a sixth places it in the *throat*. Hence *Aristotle* reports of *Philoxenus* an *Epicure*, who wished that he had a neck as long as a *Crane*, that he might the longer taste the pleasure, and take the more delight in his meat. Which way soever it is in nature, the Moral truth is the same, which you may take in this brief Note.

Every sense hath a distinct office, the Ear is for hearing, the Mouth for tasting, the Eye for seeing, the Nostrils for smelling; Thus the Lord hath made a Policy in the body Natural. The body of man is a kind of corporation, every officer standeth in his place, and hath his duty. The comeliness of the body natural, and the comeliness of a body Politique, whether civil or spiritual, shines in the due discharge of each members office: every member needs the help of his neighbour member, and the operation of every member is to help the whole; Thy eye sees, the ear hears, the Mouth tastes, as a servant, and for the service of the whole body.

There is yet another translation (observed by *Chrysostome*) in some of the Greek versions; where it is read thus, *The ear tryeth words; and the mind tasteth meats*. One letter added in the Greek, changes the signification from the *mouth* to the *mind*, taking it with that literal addition, these words are an explication of the former: As the ear tryeth words or sounds, so the mind tryeth meats. What meats? *Truth is the meat of the mind, the nourishment of the understanding*. Hence the word of truth is often compared to things edible and potable, to meat and drink, to honey, and the honey comb. And the want of the word of truth is called a Famine by the Prophet. The soul starves where the word of truth is not rightly divided, cut out, or carved to it. All the excellencies of God that are held forth in the word, are, the souls food, (Psal. 34. 8.) O taste and see that the Lord is good; what is it that tasteth how sweet the Lord is? It is the mind working, meditating, and acting faith upon him. Faith is the souls taster, faith is the mouth of the soul, which not only tasteth, but cheweth the promises and manifestations of God to his people, and so makes meat of them; *Meditation turns the promises into marrow*. My soul (saith David, Psal. 63. 5, 6.) shall be satisfied

Arist. 1. 3. Eth
cap. 10.

ut auris vres
meus haud ma-
la sententia.
Druſ.

as with marrow and fatneſs, and my mouth ſhall praiſe thee with joyfull lips, when I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches. As there is all manner of riches, ſo all man-

Pompeius non gustaret illam philosophiam.
Cic. in Pison.
Gustare ejus sermonem volo.
Plaut in mol. ſcl. Act. 6.

ner of dainties in the believing meditations of God: every promise is a diſh, and all the promiſes are a royal feaſt to faith. Hea-thenſ have given this notion about the taſt of words. Cicero in his Oration againſt Piſo, ſaith, Pompey could not taſt that Phyloſophy, He was a great Souldier, a man of action, and troubled not himſelf with ſedentary ſtudies, and bookiſh contemplations. And as there is a ſpiritual taſt, ſo a ſpiritual hearing, or rather theſe are the ſame; to taſte ſpiritually is to hear ſpiritually. It was the meat of Chriſt to do the will of him that ſent him: It is meat to ſuch as are Chriſts, to hear the will of God by thoſe whom he ſends, and the more they hear, the more wiſdome they get, as followeth:

Judicare genu est ipſius ſentire qui namq; ſentit judicat aliquo modo.
Ariſt. l. 2. de An.

Verſe 12. *With the ancient is wiſdome, and in length of dayes underſtanding.*

דַּוְדָּא
in decrepitiſ.

With the ancient is wiſdome. The ſences are a door to the underſtanding, both acting together lay up treaſures of knowledge, therefore with the *ancient is wiſdome, and in length of dayes underſtanding.* The word which we tranſlate *ancient*, ſignifies not the firſt, no nor the ſecond (for the Hebrews reckon three) but the third and laſt ſtep of Old age. The firſt, by their calculation begins at the year threeſcore, and extends to threeſcore and ten: when man is threeſcore, he enters (ſay they) the borders of old age, and while he is travelling to threeſcore and ten, he is in the firſt territory of Old age. The ſecond reaches from threeſcore and ten to fourſcore: He is an old man indeed who attains that reckoning, (*Pſal. 90. 10.*) The third is, that whole ſpace be it longer or ſhorter, that man lives beyond fourſcore. And that is properly meant by the word uſed in this Text, *with the ancient is wiſdome*, and the more ancient any are, the more wiſdome they may be ſuppoſed to have.

Triplex ſenectus apud Hebræos, decrepiti ſunt annoſiores ſenibus.

Not that every old, or every decrepit old man hath wiſdome, ſome hath attained the laſt degree or ſtep of old age, who have not attained the firſt degree of wiſdome. They have walked in a vain ſhadow, and have learned nothing. But when he ſaith, *with the ancient is wiſdome*, he means; Firſt it is the duty of old men to ſhew forth wiſdome. Secondly, Old men have had

a great opportunity to gather wisdom, a price hath been in their hands, though possibly they have not had hearts to make use of it. It is not running through a great many years, that makes men wise, *wisdom is a gift of God, not of time.* And as this doth not inferr, that ~~a~~ old men are wise, so neither doth it inferr, that none but old men are. Wisdom is not so with the ancient, as as if it could be no where else; Gray haire have not ingrossed that whole commodity, nor is it all given and granted to them. *Wisdom doth not alwaies lean on a staff, nor look through Spectacles.* It doth not alwaies (as some describe venerable old age) goe upon three leggs nor see with four eyes. Young men may have wisdom if God give it, and old men cannot have wisdom unlesse God give it. Some young men have understood as much as the ancient, yea more than the ancient, as there will be a clearer occasion to shew at the thirty second Chapter, vers. 7, 8, 9. whicher I referr the Reader, if God shall carry on this work so farr by my hand.

Observe, at present,

First, *Old men should be wise men. With the ancient is wisdom.* Where should we go for wisdom but unto them? Some will not so much as suspect young men for much wisdom, but we have reason to look for it among the Ancients. The Apostle (1 Job. 2. 11, 12.) writ to Christians of all sorts and sizes, under the titles of little children, young men and fathers, and he gives a special reason of his dedication to either of them. *I write unto you little children, because your sins are forgiven. I write unto you young men, because you are strong, &c. I write unto you fathers, why? Because you have known him which was from the beginning.* He gives a reason suitable to old men, *I write unto you fathers, because you known him that was from the beginning.* As if he had said, wisdom and knowledge are amongst old men, amongst the fathers. I take it for granted, that you are knowing men, therefore I write unto you about these depths of knowledg, *With the ancient is wisdom.* The Apostle (Heb. 5. 12.) gives a severe reproof to those who *when for the time they ought to be teachers, yet had need that one teach them again which be the first principles of the Oracles of God.* When for the time, that is, they had a great deal of time, and therefore their proficiency in holy knowledge should have been great. And proportionably how much time every one hath had, such a talent he hath had, and he shall be reckoned

Turpis & ridicula res est senex elementaris.

with, as having had it, to get wisdom. Time in it self cannot advantage us, but time bringeth advantages with it for the compassing of the greatest undertakings, and for the perfecting of those who are most imperfect. Time is not an empty duration. God hath filled time with helps to eternity, and with means to know him the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, which is eternal life. Woe to those that have not competently learned this great lesson, when for the time they ought to be teachers, &c. An old man ignorant is more childish than a child. To see an old man in the first rudiments or primer of natural knowledge, is uncomely; but how dreadful is it to see an old man not able to read nor understand the primer of the Gospel, or the first principles of Religion; we have seen sad experiences of some who have lived under powerfull means; even till decrepit old age, even until this third degree of old age, and yet have not been in their A. B. C. of saving knowledg, being unable to spell or put two letters together in the things of God, or to make out any one conclusion understandingly about the necessities to salvation. It is bad enough when children and young men are ignorant, and foolish in the things of heaven; but with what tears should we lament it, when with the ancient there is no wisdom, nor understanding in length of dayes. Which crosseth the second part of of Jobs Assertion.

And in length of dayes understanding.

Scientia domi paratur ex libris, prudentia ex itinere & usu rerum.

Both parts of the sentence have the same sence. *In length of dayes*, or in many dayes, that is, by the experiences which we get in length of dayes, understanding is improved and heightened. Experience is a great teacher. The Apostle tels us that every experience we have of God should teach us to hope in God. Experience worketh hope (Rom. 5.) Experience also worketh knowledge. Experience is a tedious Master, it keeps us long at School, but experience is a sure Master, and we may learn much by experience. *In length of dayes is understanding.*

Observe upon the whole verse,
Old men are to be honoured, and their counsel to be respected, With them (probably) there is most wisdom, and therefore they deserve most respect. Hence the Scripture calleth us often to reverence gray haire, and that we should rise up to old men,

not that we are to adore, which is indeed to dote upon old age; it is doting to think that every thing must be true which an old man saith, or which the Fathers have asserted. But as it is the *doting of any man to credit any thing which an old man speaks, or to pin our faith upon the opinion of the Ancients, so it is a sin (besides the incivility of it) to slight or undervalue what old age speaks.* Old men having enjoyed the like means that young men have, and having made improvement of the means which they have enjoyed, are to be looked upon with veneration, and their counsel is to be received with more respect than that of young men. What destroyed the Kingdom of *Rehobaham*? he followed the counsel of the young men, and would not follow the advice of the old Counsellors, who had been with his Father, and had long known the carriage of the Kingdome, and the way of government. He takes young mens counsel, and so overthroweth all. The same error and danger lies in spiritual, as well as in Temporal affairs. An ancient writer describing the happiness of a City, saith, *then a City is happy, when it useth the counsel of old men, and the strength of young men; when it hath the heads of ancient men, and the hands of young men; the one to give counsel and advice, the other, to act and execute; then a City or Commonwealth is like to be safe and flourish.* *Though we must not tie up our selves to the counsell of the ancient, nor esteem all truth because the ancients say so, truth is older than the eldest truth* *bath the grayest hair, the hoaryest head:* And though if truth be spoken by a youth, you must reverence it, and reject error, though an old man be the patron; yet old men must have reverence in what they say, and deserve preeminence in counsel.

*Maximè salva
est civitas, ubi
consilia senum
uorum a ma
obtinent. Plut.*

Job seems to apply this to his friends. You are men of years, therefore you surely have attained much understanding. You may well know what I have taught, and what I am now teaching, That God is transcendent in wisdom, that his knowledge as well as his power is over all. You must needs know that God works mysteriously and secretly, that he works supremely and authoritatively, that he needs not give an account unto the children of men. *With the ancient is this wisdom, and in length of dayes this understanding;* This is the wisdom which I shall now demonstrate.

Verſe 13. *That, with him is wiſdome and ſtrength, he hath counſel and underſtanding.*

With him. The Antecedent is not the ancient man ſpoken of before, with him wiſdome may be, but not ſtrength. Old men do probably increaſe in wiſdome, but they do certainly and unavoidably decreaſe in ſtrength. Here then we muſt look for another Antecedent diſtinct from the ancient man. *With him*, that is, *with God*, about whoſe providence and juſtice I have ſpoken, with him is wiſdome and ſtrength; as if he had ſaid, if men by hearing and caſting gather up much knowledge in a tract of time, and length of daies; Then what treaſures of knowledge and wiſdome are there in God, who is the ancient of dayes, and who is as old as eternity. Job argues from the leſſe to the greater, with God who is eternal, and inhabiteth eternity, there is wiſdome and ſtrength, and he hath counſel and underſtanding.

With him there is wiſdome and ſtrength.

*Ex ſapientia
& fortitudine
conſecit divi-
nam providen-
tiam eſſe omni-
bus partibus
perfectam.*

We met with both theſe attributes of God, Chap. 9. v. 4. *He is wiſe in heart, and mighty in ſtrength, who hath hardened himſelf againſt him and prospered?* Therefore I ſhall not ſtay upon them here, only a word.

Fiſt, God is infinitely wiſe and ſtrong. He is wiſe to deſign, and ſtrong to effect.

Secondly, They who want wiſdome muſt go to God for it. *With him is wiſdome*, as if he had ſaid, You may gather wiſdome among the creatures, and from obſervation, but all wiſdome is laid up in God: *Study alone will not make you wiſe, experiences alone will not make you wiſe, you muſt go to the Fountain of wiſdome;* So the Apoſtle directs (1 ſm 15.) If any of you lack wiſdome, let him ask of God who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not, and it ſhall be given him. And again, (v. 16.) Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and commeth down from the Father of lights; (Holy Wiſdome is not a vapour which ſumes up from the earth, but an influence which falls from that light of heaven) with whom there is no variableneſs, nor ſhadow of turning.

Some conceive that Job here anſwers the counſell of Bildad, (Chap. 8. v. 8.) Enquire of the former age, and prepare thy ſelf to the ſearch of thy fathers, for we are but of yeſterday, &c. I grant (ſaith

(saith he) we are to enquire of former ages, I am of your opinion too, that, with the ancient is wisdom; yet I do not expect to find all wisdom among the ancient, (their well hath not depth enough to yield these waters to all comers, or for all occasions) no, I must go to God; *With him is wisdom, and he hath counsel and understanding.* Though all the ancient men in the world, and ancient Counsels, affirme that, which the word of God denies, we must not believe them, for *with him is wisdom.* In the 28 Chapter of this book, *vers. 12.* the question is put, *Where shall wisdom be found? and where is the place of understanding? Where?* All the creatures disclaim it, *The depth saith, it is not in me, and the sea saith, it is not with me.* Though we may gain wisdom by conversing with the creatures, yet there is no creature hath wisdom in his keeping, or at his disposing. That's the priviledge of God; *With him is wisdom.* *With him,* as with a Master, as with a Lord; His it is. *With him,* as with a dispenser, as with a Steward; He gives it out as he pleaseth, he bestowes it upon whom he will; all wisdom is Originally in him, and derivatively from him. (*Chap. 15. 8.*) *Hast thou heard the secret of God, and dost thou restrain wisdom to thy self?* As if he had said, Thou talkest as if thou hadst been of Gods counsel, or at least as if thou hadst learnt knowledge, not only from the mouth of men, but immediatly from the mouth of God himself.

Thirdly Observe,

That all the wisdom of man, compared with God is no wisdom. Our wisdom is foolishness compared with God. I ground it from the Text, thus. He had said before, *With the ancient is wisdom, and in length of daies understanding.* Now saith he, *With him is wisdom, and he hath counsel and understanding.* As if he had said, I told you of wisdom in old men, and of understanding in length of daies, but I assure you this wisdom is nothing to the wisdom I now speak of. He meanes not a wisdom different in kinde, for if there be true wisdom in old men, it is a drop of Gods ocean, a beam of the Father of lights. But the wisdom that is in God carries the name of wisdom from the wisdom that is in old men. As all the light of the Stars is but darkness compared to the light of the Sun; so there is wisdom with men, with old men especially, and there is wisdom with God: But the wisdom that is in God, who is the ancient of dayes, extinguisheth and overcommeth all the wisdom

in men, though they be never so ancient. *With him is wisdom and strength.*

He hath counsel and understanding.

Here are four words used in reference to God: we had but two before in reference to old men, *wisdom* and *understanding*. But with God there is *wisdom*, *strength*, *counsel*, and *understanding*, and though three of the four are used promiscuously, yet as they stand here together we may give them a distinct sense.

Understanding consists in finding out secrets and mysteries, in diving to the bottom of truths. With God there is understanding, he finds out the most hidden mysteries, *his name is the Revealer of Secrets.*

Secondly, *Counsel* is properly that which fits means to the attaining of an end. When we have a business to do, we go to counsel, and Counsel is to provide suitable means for the carrying on of such a design, and the accomplishing of our desires.

Thirdly, *Wisdom*, as it stands distinct from understanding and counsel, consists in the due ordering of those means which counsel hath found out. Thus understanding finds out the matter, counsel declares the means, and wisdom manages and disposeth all towards the attainment of the end. All these are in God.

And a fourth, which is *Strength* to execute and carry on the means (according to the dictates of understanding, counsel and wisdom) home to the end. If a man be furnished with the greatest measure of understanding to find out, of counsel to contrive, of wisdom to dispose, yet if he want an arm of strength, what can he do? 'Tis true, wisdom is better than weapons of war, yet what can wisdom do without weapons of war? A good head is better than a strong arm, yet what can a good head do without a strong arm? But where wisdom & weapons of war, & where a good head and a strong arm joyn, what can they not do?

Job to demonstrate the absolute compleatness of God in all his administrations, shews all these meeting in God. Would you have understanding? it is in him, he can search out deep things. Would you have counsel? He can direct you to the most proper means. *With him is counsel.* Would you have wisdom? He can manage & order means to the best advantage. *He is the God only wise.* Would you have strength? He can execute and bring to pass effectually whatsoever he intendeth, his power is over all, and there

there is nothing too hard for him. Thus the glory of God is lifted up, not only above the actings, but above the thoughts of man.

Hence Observe.

God is compleat in all perfections. Among men excellencies are scattered, and lye divided, one hath depth of understanding, a second clearness for counsel, a third is enriched with treasures of wisdom, a fourth, is fortified with a hand of power. 'Tis rare when any two of these meet in one man, and he is a kind of miracle of men, in whom they all meet, though but in some low or languid degree. But in God they meet all, and continue alwaies in the highest degree. Those things which single put honour and value upon man, concenter in God. Who would not seek unto and depend on God? **Who would not have God his friend, in whom he hath all friends, and who is such a friend, that having him we need not care nor fear who is our enemy?**

One God helping, is more than all men opposing. When word was brought to a great Carthaginian Commander in their war against the *Romans*, that the Enemy was very strong and numerous; He answer'd the trembling Intelligencer. *How many do you reckon me for?* Some men are of such vast wisdom, strength and courage, that one of them may be mustered for a whole Army of men. *How many then may we reckon God for,* who alone hath all that which all men have among them, who alone can do more, than all men combined together can? Men act their several parts in the scene of worldly affairs, but God acteth all parts. As he that rides post a long Journey, takes fresh horses to carry him through; one horse carries him the stage first, and there he is left: A second speeds him to another Stage, and there staves: In the same manner a third to a third. So it is in transacting any great businesse, one man will help you thus far, and another will carry you so far, and a third yet farther. One carryeth us as far as counsel and wisdom work, but he wants strength; another hath strength, but he wants faithfulness. But God carraies us through the whole journey of our works, he is never tried, nor can he be taken off. (*Isa. 40. 28.*) *The mighty God fainteth not, neither is weary, and there is no searching of his understanding.* Yea, not only hath he this unweariedness in himself, but he communicates it to his, *the young men shall faint,* (that is, they that are strong, especially they that boast in their own strength) *but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their*

strength, they shall mount up with wings as Eagles, they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint. The Lord gives his much of himself, they shall act like God who trust in God.

Job having arrayed the Lord in all these excellencies, proceeds to illustrate what he had asserted by some special instances. As if he had said, lest any should think that I speak only general notions, I will give you particular proofs, which you who are old men have surely made out by your own Observation, and are able from experience to attest my discourse.

Verse 14. *Behold, he breaketh down, and it cannot be built again, he shutteth up a man, and there can be no opening.*

Here is an instance of the strength and power, yea of his wisdom and understanding; all these concur in one act of providence; though some one appear and be put forth more eminently. I will tell you (saith *Job*) what God doth: this God of whom I have spoken great things, doth great things; Yea, it is far easier for him to do great things, then for me to speak of them, for himself can as easily, and as speedily do them, as speak them. The Works which speak him great, are more then can be spoken; Of some I shall now speak.

Behold, he breaketh down, and it cannot be built again.

These words relate to the attribute of power. *With him is strength.* And they are more then a bare affirmation that God is strong, they prove that he is strongest, or that there is no strength a match for his: This the instance reacheth fully, *Behold, he breaketh down, and it cannot be built again.* No man, no nor Angel is able to preserve, what God will overthrow, or to restore, what he hath once destroyed.

The word which we translate *to break down*, signifies an utter dissipation or dissolution, even the putting of a thing out of its being: Some interpret it by *Anathematizing, cursing, or excommunicating*, which imports the devoting both of things and persons to a total and perpetual ruine.

First, some understand *Job* speaking here of his own children and family which God had broken down, with a high and strong hand. Children are a living house; A son in the sacred language hath his name from building, because sons build or continue their fathers

דָּרַס

Proprie delev-
verit, dissipave-
rit.

Ampla valde
et vehemens
est illa signifi-
catio destruen-
di, ut etiam de-
notet Anathe-
matizare ex-
communicare.
Eia.

fathers houſe. When Sarah prayed Abraham to go in unto Hagar, ſhe ſaid, *It may be I may obtain Children by her*: The Hebrew letter is, *It may be I may be builded by her*, Gen. 16. 2. Rachel invited Jacob to Bilhahs bed upon the ſame hopes, That I alſo (ſaid ſhe) may have Children, or be built by her, Gen. 30. 3. Now as when God gives Children he builds, ſo when he takes them away he breaks down. *If the Lord break down thus*, if he take away the Children which he hath given, who can reſtore them to us again? or repair that breach.

Secondly, others conceive he refers to thoſe two ancient acts of Gods breaking providence, the overthrow of Babel and the deſtruction of Sodom, which were not builded again to that day.

Thirdly, we need not reſtrain his ſence to any ſpecial City, or to his own family, expound him rather of the ruining of mans eſtate in general. *If the Lord break down*, and deſace their worldly glory, who are moſt fairly built and raiſed up, who have ſtrongeſt foundations, and firmeſt walls, who have higheſt towers, and the moſt aspiring pinacles: If he pull down an eſtate thus founded, thus raiſed, and break it to pieces, it ſhall certainly be broken, and that without remedy.

*Melius quadrat
ut in communi
dicatur, quic-
quid vult De-
us quacunque
ratione destruc-
re. Bol.*

Hence Obſerve,

First, *What God will do, he can do, and it ſhall be done*. He breaks down without asking any man leave, God doth not work by ſufferance, but by authority. The whole world is his work, and he may make what work he will in the world. *If he will work, who ſhall let it?* (Iſai. 43. 13.) if he will ſmite, who ſhall let it? He will not put up his ſword at thy word, no nor for fear of thy power. If he give the word, *Break down, down it ſhall*. The word of God plants, and the word of God roots up, and it doth both irrefiſtably. If God will deſtroy perſons or Kingdoms, there is no ſaving them. As none can pull down, what he ſets up, ſo none can ſet up what he pulls down. If he ſaith, *Let it lye in the duſt*, who ſhall raiſe it up again? The Prophet (Mal. 1. 4.) brings in Edom ſurveying the deſolations which God had made upon his Territories. Edom began to reflect ſadly upon his ruinous condition, *We are impoverished*, ſaith Edom: upon this Edom takes counſel, yea he reſolves, *We will return and build the deſolate places*. But what ſaith the Lord to Edom? (Do and you will) *They ſhall build, but I will throw down again*. As if he had ſaid, *I once threw down, and made deſolate the palaces of Edom,*

and if Edom will attempt to better his condition, and build again, I will again make desolate: as fast as Edom repaires, I will pull down. Man shall never make up the works which God hath slighted, till he hath leave for it from heaven. (Psal. 28. 5.) Because they regard not the works of the Lord, he shall destroy them, and not build them up, that is, he shall destroy them, & they shall not be built. For unless God himself will build what he hath destroyed, no man can, (Hos. 6. 1.) Let us return unto the Lord, for he hath torn, and he will heal us; If God make the wound, it is not in the skill or Chirurgery of man to give a plaister: He hath smitten us, and he will bind us up, when you have got a wound from God, you cannot get your cure from the creature; man tears and God heals, man smites, and God binds us up; but if God tear and smite, he must bind up and heal, or else we can never be healed: our wound and our salve come from the same hand. When Jericho was destroyed, the Lord said by Joshua, Cursed be the man that raiseth up and buildeth this City Jericho, he shall lay the foundation thereof in his first born, and in his youngest son shall he set up the gates of it, (Joth. 6. 26.) We find that for five hundred years none attempted to build this City, the curse of God lay so heavy upon it; but after five hundred years, whether the man forgetting what was spoken, or presuming that now after so long a time, God would forget what he had spoken and not make it good: One Hile the Bethelite (as you may read 1 King 16. 34.) built it, but how? By building that, he pulled down himself, for saith the Text, He laid the foundation thereof in Abiram his first-born, and set up the gates thereof in his youngest son Segub, according to the word of the Lord which he spake by Joshua the son of Nun. The meaning is this; when he laid the foundation of that City, the curse of God fell upon him, and his eldest son died, God put down the best part of his living house, his eldest son, and yet he would not be warned of the judgement of God, but went on to finish Jericho (for setting up the gates notes the accomplishment of his work, as laying the foundation signifies the beginning of it) and what came of that? then the Lord slew his youngest son, he set up the gates thereof in his youngest son Segub, he built Jericho: but he could not deliver himself from the curse; God did not say, this city shall never be built, but cursed be he that builds it, and this curse shall be upon him, He shall lay the foundation thereof in his first born, and in his youngest son shall he set

Set up the gates of it, and so it came to pass, the History fulfilled the Prophecy, and the work of providence gave Testimony to the truth of the word. This also is very remarkable in the story of Jerusalem. Christ threatned *Jerusalem* that it should be destroyed, and the Temple, that *there should not be left one stone upon another, that should not be thrown down.* The event answered this threat. The Romans ruined all, and were that *abomination of desolation in the holy place.* Yet in the time of *Julian* some had a design to build the Temple and restore *Jerusalem*: Yea that Apostate *Julian* on purpose to cross the words of Christ, & the counsel of God, of which he had heard, that *There should not be left one stone upon another*; therefore he (not out of any good will to the Jews, or out of any desire to have the Worship of God and the Temple restored, but only in spight and malice, to see whether he could cross the word of Christ, and reverse his curse) gave the Jews (like another *Cyrus*) ample commission and full liberty to go and build the Temple, in pursuance of which grant they gathered a vast store of materials; but when they began to work, the story saith, That God from Heaven by storm and tempest did so dismay and scatter them, that they were forced to give it over, and confess the hand of God was against them; he confounded those builders of the Temple as he did the builders of *Babel*, it is (in some cases) a dangerous attempt to build when the Lord hath pulled down, but it is (in all cases) an impossible attempt to build what God resolves shall continue down.

*Amnians
Marcel l. 23.
Hist. Tripart.
l. 6. c. 43.*

It is thus also with private men, some have had fair estates in the world, God puls them down, and breaks them to peeces. We use to say of a man that failes, *he is broke*; such will be trying to get up again, yet they cannot: some after breakings have had more than they had at first to set up with besides their stocks of experience; yea these men, besides their experience, have added more diligence in the use of all honest meanes, yet God will not let them build their estates again, he will not let them thrive in the world; 'Tis so also with the body: God puls down a mans health and strength, and then he goes from Physitian to Physitian, he asks every one he meets, what he may do to build up his body again? yet this man must carry a crazie body to the grave. *He breaketh down, it cannot be built again.*

That's the first Instance.

The second is, *He shutteth up a man, and there can be no opening.*

The

ךסד

*Ad via impe-
dimentum ad
carcerem ad
vinoulum re-
ferri solet.*

*Concludere ut
nemo aperiat,
suprema pote-
statis & libera-
omnium admi-
nistrationis
symbolum est.
Sanct.*

*Aperire, aliquid
significat le-
rum fortuna-
rum, contra-
clausum, mise-
rum & arum-
nosum.
Aprilis voca-
tur ab operien-
do caelo.*

The word which we translate to shut up, notes any kind of block, impediment or hinderance laid in a mans way to stop his course; it is applied also to locking of a door, that none come out, or go in; to the shutting of the Heavens that it rain not, (2 Chron. 7. 17.) shutting and opening, note acts of power, and so to shut that no man can open, or so to open that no man can shut, are acts of supream power. Hence the giving of a key hath been an ancient ceremony of investing men in places of authority and chief command, *he shutteth up a man, and there can be no opening*, that is, none till he pleaseth. God saith of Eliakim (Isai. 22. 22.) *The key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder, so he shall open and none shall shut, and he shall shut, and none shall open*; that is, he shall have the highest office in the Kings house; to shut and open, beares the same sence with *going out, and coming in before a people*, Numb. 27. 17. Christ, of whose Kingdom the house of David was a Type, is described by opening and shutting (Rev. 3. 7.) *These things saith he that openeth, and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth*; Christ hath all power in Heaven and Earth given into his hand, and therefore what his hand doth, no man can undoe. Now in his absence he puts this general power into the hand of the Church, to be exercised and administred by such Officers as himself hath appointed: Thus he applyes himself to Peter, after he had made that confession which is the Foundation of the Church (Mat. 16. 19.) *I will give to thee the keyes of the Kingdome of Heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt binde on earth, shall he bound in Heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in Heaven*, where though the words vary, yet the meaning is the same, and give us this assurance, that no power can rescind what is done in and by the Church according to the will of Christ in binding or in loosing. Further, *shutting up*, notes in general the putting of a man into a sad condition, whether in regard of civil or spiritual things, and *opening* imports deliverance and freedome from either.

Hence Observe,

There is no prevailing against God, or repealing any of his resolves. As when he breaketh, none can build, so when he shutteth up, none can open. Balaam confesseth (Numb. 23. 20.) *God hath blessed and I cannot reverse it, and where God hath cursed, who can reverse it!* If the Lord shut any door against us, or upon us, all the smiths on earth cannot make a key to open it. If God shut or lock

lock up the Heavens that it rain not, who can open them? *Elijah* comes in as if he had the keyes of Heaven at his girdle, (*1 Kings 17. 1.*) *There shall be (saith he) neither dew nor rain these years but according to my word.* We find in the Epistle of *James* what the word was, *Elijah prayed that it might not rain, & it rained not on the earth, for the space of three years and six moneths. And Elijah prayed again, and the Heaven gave rain.* It was not an Imperative word, it was a petitionary word, that locked and unlocked the Heaven: none hath an Imperative word, a word of command to lock and unlock Heaven, but God himself, *Amos 3. 7.* *I caused it to rain upon one City, and caused it not to rain upon another City.* Again, If the Lord shut up the womb, there is no bringing forth, *Gen. 20. 18.* *the Lord had fast closed up all the wombs of the house of Abimelech.* If the Lord shut up the earth, it becomes as iron, and brings forth no fruit; if he shut a man up in sickness, in poverty, in disgrace, in trouble of spirit, there is no unbinding, no opening. *He hath concluded or shut up all under sin, that every mouth may be stopped, Rom 3. 19.* *He hath shut them all in unbelief, that he may have mercy upon all, Rom. 11. 32.* They are shut up as a company of prisoners in a dungeon, that they may receive, whatsoever they receive at the hand of mercy; for who can open for those men? who can unloose these Seals of unbelief, till mercy unloose them? As none could unloose the Seals of that Book wherein the mysteries of God were contained but only Christ, *Rev. 5. 5.* So none can open the Seals of sin which are upon the heart of an unbeliever, but Christ only: Christ who opened the Book, opens to our Souls, Christ who loosed the Seals, can loose us from our sins: Him God hath appointed to be the great *Opener* of prisons, and the *Deliverer* of those who are in bonds; If the Son make us free, we shall be free indeed, and until he make us free, we are slaves indeed. *Whom justice locks up, mercy lets out.* There is no opening either by the force, or by the desert of man, where God shutteth up. The evil Angels have so much power that they are called powers, yet they could never get out of prison. *They are reserved in everlasting chains under darkness to the judgement of the great day, (Iude v. 6.)* Their chaines will never wear out, nor can they be filed off, whithersoever those wicked spirits go, they go in chains, like prisoners who are kept till the day of Session. The Apostle *Peter (1 Pet. 3. 19.)* assures us as much of the spirits or souls of

those evil men who lived in the days of *Noah*; These being cast into prison, could never break prison nor make an escape unto this day. Christ by his Spirit in the ministry of *Noah*, preached to them for the preventing of their imprisonment. He preached to them who are now in prison, that they might not have bin imprisoned. *But see how sure a Goale Hell is*: those disobedient unbelievers who were cast into prison in *Noahs* time, were all fast there in the Apostle *Peters* time. There is no picking the lock of Hell gates, nor breaking through the walls of that fiery *Tophet*, *Abraham* in the parable (*Luk. 16.*) assures the rich man in hell, that he could not come out of that place of torment, and that no comfort, not so much as a drop of comfort could be conveyed to that place (*v. 26.*) *And besides all this* (saith he) *between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot, neither can they pass to us that would come from thence.* The man is convinced that he could not get out, and therefore desires that no friend of his might come in, but that *Lazarus* might be sent to *testifie* to his five brethren, lest they should come into that place of torment. He knew well enough, if they were once there, they could come out no more. God will at last send his writ to the grave, to bring out the bodies of the wicked that are shut up there, and he will send a writ to hell, to bring out the spirits that are shut up there, that both together may receive sentence of eternal imprisonment and torment: God will shut them up, and there shall be no opening for ever.

JOB Chap. 12. Vers. 15, 16.

*Behold, he withholdeth the waters, and they dry up;
also he sendeth them out, and they overturn the
earth.*

*With him is strength and wisdom: the deceived and
the deceiver are his.*

JOB proceedeth upon his former argument in giving instances to prove the great power and the unquestionable sovereignty of the Lord. In the former context we had an instance in civil affairs: *He breaketh down, and it cannot be built again; he shutteth up a man, and there can be no opening.* The acts of God are irreverisble by man: Here he instanceth in natural things, *Behold, he withholdeth the waters, &c.* As God shutteth up men and they cannot get out, so he shutteth up and imprisoneth the waters, and they cannot get out. This also calleth up our attention and admiration, *Behold,*

He withholdeth.

The word signifies, First, to stop or to stay a thing by strength, and fine force. Secondly, to stop or to stay a thing by authority or command. Thirdly, to stop a thing by entreaty or by prayer (2 Sam. 24. 21.) When David offered a sacrifice in the floore of Araunah, the text saith, *so the plague was staid*: there was a stay, a stop, a withholding of the Plague: David intreated the Lord, and the Lord at his intreaty gave that effect, he chekt the malignity of the pestilence, and bid the destroying Angel sheath his sword. The same word is used (Num. 16. 48.) when the plague was begun among the people, Aaron took a Censer and offered incense, *and so the Plague was staid*, or withheld: the plague was marching on swiftly and furiously, but at the intercession of Aaron, God stopt its course, and bid it stand. This withholding, is sometimes applyed to the laws of men; Laws are as boundaries and limits, yea, laws are as bridles and bonds, as chains and fetters, to stay and restrain, to stop and withhold the sinful extravagancies and excursions of the flesh. I find it often applyed to the withholding of water. *If I (saith the Lord) shut up Heaven, that there be no rain,* (2 Chron. 7.

732

Prohibuit cessare fecit.

13) then if ye pray, &c. God locks the clouds, and prayer is a key of Gods own making to open them. This word is also applied to the restraint of that other element, the stopping and shutting in of fire (*Jer. 20. 9.*) Fire and water are head-strong elements, *They are good servants, but ill Masters.* God puts a bridle upon the fire, a bridle upon the water. *He withholdeth.*

The waters.

What waters? It may be understood, First, of waters under or upon the earth, there are *subterranean channels* of water: Springs furnish rivers, rivers are *supraterranean channels*, earthen vessels, or rather vehicles and conveyances of water. He withholdeth the waters, he withholdeth the under-waters, he forbids those springs to feed the rivers, and then they are dried up. Secondly, it may be understood of the waters that are above (the Empire of the Lord reacheth both) waters hang in the clouds, there are seas of water above us; it is the mighty power of God which gives those *aiery sponges* the clouds, a retentive faculty, for else they would soon dissolve and overwhelm us. And it is from the anger and judgements of God, that those *aiery sponges* the clouds, are sometimes so closed up, that they yield no more water than Iron or Adamant. As he alwayes withholds the water from drowning the whole earth, so he sometimes withholds it from refreshing many parts of the earth, he forbids the clouds to distil a drop. Thirdly, it may be expounded of the waters of the sea, which feed the springs, as springs feed the rivers, (*Nah. 1. 4.*) *He rebuketh the Sea and maketh it dry, and dryeth up all the rivers.* Where the sea is dried, the rivers must. The sea is grandmother to the rivers. The Prophet *Zachary* speaks the same (*chap. 10, 11.*) He shall smite the waves of the Sea, & all the deeps of the rivers shall dry up. *Thus also he withholdeth the waters.*

And they dry up.

What dryeth up? The rivers dry up, when the waters of the sea are withholden, and the things that grow upon the earth dry up, when the waters of heaven are withholden, and when they are withholden very long, not only the fruits of the earth, but the rivers dry up too. In that great drought, (*1 King 17. 17.*)
The

The brooks dried up because there was no rain in the land : Again, (Joel 1. 20.) The beasts of the field cry also unto thee, for the rivers of waters are dried up, and the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness. The fire hath devoured, what fire? It was not ordinary elemental fire that burn'd the pastures, the fire was the sun, there being no rain to mollifie and mitigate his scorching beams, the sun as a fire consumed the pastures of the wilderness. So here, He withholdeth the waters and they dry up, that is, the pastures (as well as the rivers) together with all vegetables, that are nursed and nourished by those breasts of Heaven distilling upon them.

Further, *He withholdeth the waters and they dry up*; takes in the effect which follows, the withholding of the waters, and the dryness of the earth; namely, *barrenness, and famine*: and so the cause is put for the effect, and, he withholdeth the waters, is he causeth famine in a land: He withholdeth the waters, and, then corn, and grass, trees, and plants dry up. That three years famine (2 Sam. 21.) was from an extraordinary drought, as is conceived: The fruit of a drought is famine; and the fruit of rain is abundance. Plenty descends from Heaven in showres: God takes away the fruits of the earth by taking away that which should nourish and feed the earth in bearing fruit.

q. d. Quando
vult potest tum
sterilizar m
tum copiosam
rerum omnium
abundantiam
elargiri. Bold.

I shall but note two things from this briefly, referring the reader to the 13th. verse of the 15th Chapter, where the power of God in ordering rain and waters is more fully opened.

Hence Observe,

First, *The waters are at Gods command, He withholdeth them.*

He withholdeth them as it were by a law, or he withholdeth them as with a bridle. *There shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word, saith Elijah (1 King. 17. 1.)* This spake he in the power of God, for he prayed, and then the rain or the waters were withholden. God complained of his vineyard; (Isa. 5.) that he had bestowed much cost upon it, and yet had received little rent from it, unless such as was paid in base coin, *He looked for Righteousness, but beheld Oppression, &c.* well saith the Lord, *Go to, I will tell you what I will do, I will do thus and thus, and besides all this, I will command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it.* The power of God and his glory is wonderfully lifted up in this work of providence (Amos 4. 7.) *I have withholden the rain from you, when there were yet three moneths to the*

harvest, that is, in the time when the corn and the grasse had most need of rain, *I withheld it, and I caused it* (saith he) *to rain upon one City, and caused it not to rain upon another City*: read Jer. 5. 24. Jer. 10. 13. Joel 2. 23. Matth. 5. 45. Act. 14. 17. There is a piece of secret Atheism in some about this point; The heart may be sweetly moistned by the acknowledgements of God in the rain: But most stick too much in natural causes, and scarce look beyond the Almanack for the changes of the weather. We shall have rain (say they) at the change of the Moon, or when the wind turns. 'Tis true, that there is a natural reason, why at the change of the Moon, why at the change of the wind, there may be a change of the weather, yet God hath a power above the wind, and above the Moon; and therefore sometimes he lets the Moon change and change, yet no rain; and the wind blows from all the points of Heaven, and yet no rain: That we might not stick in second causes, God often acts beyond them, yea against them: And that we should not despise second causes, and the order in which God hath disposed the frame of nature, he often works with them, and by them. When natural causes produce their effects, God shews his bounty; and when natural causes cannot produce their effects, God shews his sovereignty, and teacheth man his duty. Hence the want of rain in an ordinary course, is put as an extraordinary occasion of prayer, and seeking God (1 King 8. 35. Zech. 10. 1.) *Ask ye of the Lord rain, in the time of the latter rain.* When rain comes not in the season of nature, we may shew much of grace in asking rain.

Secondly, Observe,

That natural causes being stopped, natural effects must cease.

There can be no natural effect without a natural cause; All such effects are miraculous; withhold the rain, and all dries up; there is a natural dependance between the fruitfulness of the earth and the rain. *David* in his last words, shewing how blessed, and how great a blessing a just and a godly King is: *He shall be* (saith he) *as the light of the morning when the sun ariseth, even a morning without Clouds, as the tender grasse springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain* (2 Sam. 23. 4.) Here he puts in all the natural causes. *He shall be as the tender grasse springing out of the earth*: But what causeth the grasse to spring out of the earth? There is first, the rain, to moisten; and secondly, the clear shining, to warm and draw out the seminal vertue of the earth.

earth. When the Lord threatens (*Deut. 28 23.*) *I will make the Heavens over you as brass*, he presently adds, *and the earth under you shall be as iron*; if the Heavens be brass, the earth will be iron. We have this concatenation of causes elegantly set forth (*Hos. 2. 21, 22.*) *I will hear the Heavens* (saith God) *and they shall hear the earth, and the earth shall hear the corn and the wine, and the oyl, and they shall hear Jezreel.* Jezreel must have corn and wine, and oyl; corn & wine must be had from fertile earth, the earth cannot be fertile without benigne Heavens, the Heavens can shew no kindness to the earth, either by moystring showers, or quickning heat, without orders from God. Hence the heavens cry to God, and the earth to the heavens, and the corn to the earth, and Jezreel to the corn, that he may be fed. *If God withholdeth the waters of heaven, the earth drys up*; we are fed by the blessing of God upon second causes. Again,

He sendeth them out, and they overturn the earth.

This latter clause doth not hold out the mercy opposite to the judgment in the former, but it holds out a second judgment. For as there, *the withholding of the waters* was a judgment, so here, *the sending of them out* is a judgement too. When God withholdeth the waters over long, the earth cannot bear fruit, and when God sendeth out the waters overmuch, the fruit which the earth bears is stifeled and choacked. Waters are ordinarily sent to refresh and revive the earth, but here they are sent to overturn the earth.

He sendeth them.

The word signifies the sending out of a messenger upon some command. Waters receive a commission to stay at home, and they receive a commission to go out in a way of judgment: God gives them a precept, a writ, *Go and overturn the earth*: He loosens their bonds, and enlargeth their borders, to punish those who will not be kept in bounds. Moses describing the deluge (to which Job here as some conceive alludes) saith, *All the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened* (*Gen. 7. 11.*) both the under-waters, and the upper-waters were till that day imprisoned and kept close by the decree of

שלח

Si miserit a-
quas tanquam
nuncium defe-
rentes aut jussu-
onem demer-
genda terra si-
bi demandatum.
Pin.

of God. But then God broke open the prison, and let out the waters, and we see what work they made in the world.

They overturned the earth.

עֲבָרָה
E^urti muta-
vis substantiam
formam aut lo-
cum rei alicu-
jus.

The word notes a change both of place and state; either of which, when they are great, are an overthrow or an overturning. But is not the earth too big to be overturned? and hath not God promised that he will never destroy the earth again by water? Besides, the earth is rather overwhelmed, then overturned by the waters. To clear this. *The earth* may be taken three waies.

First, For some special tract or province of the earth, which the Lord may overturn, that is, spoil and deface without breach of that promise, *Gen. 9. 11.* The bow in the clouds is a signe between God and the world, that he will never drown the world any more; this doth not hinder the overthrowing of great tracts and parts of the world by water.

Secondly, By the earth we may understand the inhabitants of any part of the earth, and the dwellings which they have raised for themselves upon the earth. These the waters are often sent out to overturn, though the site and soil of the earth remain the same.

Thirdly, By the earth, we may understand the fruits of the earth, or the things which grow out of the earth. Thus God overturneth the earth, by sending out immoderate rains and excessive showers: When corn and grafs, when the vines and olives are destroyed, the earth (for that season) is destroyed.

Hence Observe,

First, *The Lord can make any of the creatures mans scourge.*

He that made the whole world without any instrument, can make one part of the world an instrument to destroy another: He that set up the world without help, cannot want help to throw it down. He hath his fire-works and his water-works ready, *He sendeth out the waters, and they overturn the earth.* We use to say, *fire and water have no mercy*; Water is a terrible element, though it is a useful and a comfortable element. I might bring you many stories, ancient and modern, of the wonderful effects of water. Pliny in his natural history, and Seneca, in his natural questions, give us sundry instances of Towns and Countries, made desolate by water.

Plin. lib. 2. cap.
90. & 92.
Nat. Hist.
Sen. lib. 6. Nat.
quest. c. 23.

The

The question is put (*Job. 38. 22.*) *Hast thou entred into the treasures of the snow? Or hast thou ſeen the treasures of the hail? which I have reſerved, againſt when? which I have reſerved againſt the time of trouble, againſt the day of battel and warr?* The Lord ſpeakes here as ſome great Prince, who hath a magazine ſtored & filled with ammunition againſt a time of war. *Hast thou (ſaith he) entred into the treasures of the ſnow?* Hast thou been in my magazine, and conſidered what ſtores I have laid up there againſt the day of battle and warre? What day of battle and warre is this? we may expound it either one or both of theſe wayes, Firſt, Of ſome day of Gods ſpecial wrath and judgment upon a people, when no enemy appears but himſelf; when he (as it were) in perſon makes warr upon them, and comes forth in battle againſt them: In ſuch a day of battle as this, he brings out theſe treasures of wrath, the ſnow and the hail. God went to warre and battle againſt Egypt immediately; and one of the ſoreſt plagues was the hail, which deſtroyed the earth by killing the cattle, corne and fruits, *Exod. 9. 18.* God ſent down ſhowers of water made up into bullets, upon Egypt, ſuch is hail. Secondly, We may underſtand it of a day when a war is made againſt his people; for then he ſometimes brings forth this ammunition out of his ſtorehouſes, he fires his great guns, and poures out volleys of ſhot from heaven upon the enemies of his people. We have a clear record, which gives God the glory of this truth (*Joſh. 10. 11.*) When *Joſhua* was engaged in battle with thoſe uncircumciſed nations, *The Lord caſt down great ſtones from heaven upon them, and they dyed, they were more which dyed with hail ſtones, than they whom the children of Iſrael ſlew with the ſword.* Thus whether we underſtand that text of the day of Gods immediate war againſt evil men, or, of the day when evil men war againſt the people of God: Both are evidences of his power, in ſending *waters, hail, and ſnow, ſtorm and tempeſts* (all which he hath at his command) *to overturn the earth.* Great Princes and States, ſend forth their Generals with command to overturn Cities, and deſtroy all that will not ſubmit unto them; God gives a charge to ſenſeleſs and inanimate creatures to go forth and overturn the earth, and it is done.

Secondly, Obſerve,

That the very ſame creature which is a mercy to us, may be a great affliction, and a ſcourge to us.

K k

Water

Waters fatten, and waters destroy the earth. We pray in drought for rain and waters; the Lord can give us rain, until rain shall afflict as much as drought. *There is no earthly thing but we may have too much of it.* The excess of any creature is a judgment upon the creature. We may soon have too much fire, and too much water, too much heat and too much cold; as the want of these things troubles us, so likewise doth the glut of them: we depend upon God as much for the quantity and measure of outward mercies, as for the mercies themselves. See here a difference between the things of nature and the things of grace. *We can never have too much of grace, nor too much of the spirit.* The more we have of these the better, and we are then best, when we have most. A gracious heart grows up to glory, through the abundance of grace. *Be not drunk with wine wherein is excess,* (is the Apostles caution, (Eph. 5. 18.) *But be filled with the spirit.* We may drink wine quickly to excess, but we cannot be filled with the spirit to excess, there is no excess possible in that, and therefore the Apostle gives no caution about it. Take your fill of the spirit you cannot be overfilled. *The wine of the spirit doth not make us drunk, the more we drink of it the more sober we are.* And the waters of the spirit do never drown us, the more and the oftener they fall upon us, or overflow us, the more fruitful we are. The waters of the spirit are never sent out to overturn the soul; the mightiest inundations of Grace, makes the heart mighty for God. *Spiritual things in the least degree are a blessing, and the greater the degree is, the greater is the blessing.* Hence that promise, *In the later dayes* (saith God) *I will pour out my spirit,* you shall not only have some drops, and still dews, but strong showers, rivers and torrents flowing down from heaven, upon the dry and parched ground, upon the barren wilderness, to make it like Eden the garden of God; such rivers shall run into you, till you shall have rivers running from you. *He that believeth on me* (saith Christ, Job. 7. 38.) *out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water:* This he spake of the spirit, which they that believe on him should receive.

Verse 16. *With him is strength and wisdom, the deceived and the deceiver are his.*

The former instance was in the works of nature, now Job instances in civil things; shewing the providence and power of God

God acting mightily in them: *With him is strength and wisdom.*

We had these words at the 13th verse [*With him is wisdom and strength*] so we translate in both. Why doth he (only two verses put between) repeat the same thing again? He had said, verse 12. *With him is wisdom and strength*, here *with him is strength and wisdom*: Why doth he touch so often upon this string?

Note from it, First, *That all repetitions are not useless and vain.* Repetitions in Scripture have not only an elegancy in them, but a profitableness in them. That's one thing.

Secondly, From the matter, *With him is strength and wisdom*, (That's the point) It is no small matter that he repeateth, and it teacheth us thus much, *That we need to hear often of, and meditate often upon, the power and wisdom of God.* When we have learned that lesson once well, we have learned a great many lessons: When the heart is but assured and settled in this truth, and can make the inferences, and draw out the conclusions which flow from those premises, we have profited very much in the knowledge of God.

But further, we may answer. The reason why *Job* repeateth what he had so lately asserted, may be this, because he beginneth upon a new subject: And therefore, as he puts this preface [*with him is wisdom and strength*] to those former instances, so now giving instances of an higher nature, he renews that doctrine, *with him is wisdom and strength*. He would have the thoughts of men close fully with these attributes of God. As if he had said, *I shall speak to you of such things as you will never believe, nor honour God in the manifestation of them, unless your hearts be very well settled upon this foundation, that with him is strength and wisdom.*

Hence observe,

That great truths must be ushered, or led in with great thoughts of God.

As in prayer, when weighty petitions are made, we finde the Saints raising up their hearts, and beating up their spirits to high thoughts of God: so when any great doctrinal truths are laid before us, usually there is somewhat prefaced about the greatness of God, which may cause us to reverence and adore such truths. The Prophets, *Thus saith the Lord*, or, *Thus saith the Lord of hosts*, was as if they had said, We speak his words, who is able to make them good.

*Epiphonemicus
dictum, cum eo
sane est robur
& ratio. Merc.*

Or lastly, *Job* speaks this only in a way of acclamation, as being lifted up and ravished with the meditation of Gods greatness, power, and wisdom. And therefore as he had said, so he saith it a second time, *with him is wisdom and strength*. He is the strong God, the wise God: This Rhetoricians call (*Epiphonema*) a raising up of the voice and spirit, in acclamation to the truth of that which is spoken. When the Apostle had exhorted the Saints to rejoyce, he adds, *and again I say rejoyce*: so here, did I say the Lord hath wisdom and strength? I will say it again, with him is wisdom, and strength.

*Ita fortitudi-
nem significat,
ut etiam digni-
tatem, prestan-
tiam, honorem
& excellenti-
am connotet.
Hieronymus
vertit imperi-
um sape, vir-
tus. 70 Honor
regius.*

וְיָמָּוּ

*Omne ens.
Ramb.*

*Omnium rerum
vis et robur,
quo fit ut sint
& esse perse-
verent id quod
sunt ab illis est.
Bez.*

*Tuscius deno-
tat substanti-
am eminentissi-
mam qualis est
dignitas regalis*

But though the words in our translation are the same with the 13th verse, yet the Hebrew differs. In the 13th verse the words are *Chochmah* and *Geburah*, but here, *Gboz* and *Tosiah*, which though they bear the same interpretation in the English, yet they have a greater force in the Original: For the former signifies not only irresistible strength, but excellency and dignity joyned with that strength: So that it imports a person cloathed as much with dignity and honour, as with strength and power (*Psal. 29. 1.*) *Give unto the Lord glory and strength*; That is, give unto the Lord a strength which is glorious. *Jerome* translates this word often by *Imperium*, sometimes by *virtus*, nothing in both, an *Imperial Sovereignty* or power.

The later word signifies not only wisdom in general, but the highest and purest wisdom, the most sublimated and refined wisdom, *The very quintessence and spirit of wisdom*; Again, it signifies not only the quintessence, and extract of wisdom, but being and existence: As if he had said, *with him is being substance, permanency*: divers of the Rabbins translate so, and so doth Mr. Broughton, *He hath the force and all that is*, all being is contracted and brought into God, for he is the first being, and in him all things live, move, and have their being. Now here is much more than we had at the 13th verse, *with him is force, and all that is*; that is, the being and subsistence of all creatures is contained in God. God is his own being, he is self-being, self-existence; and all existence or being is derived from him. *This is the highest eulogy of God.* Thirdly, It signifies not only the first being, but the most excellent being, the being and subsistence (so some of the Rabbins render it) of the high Priest, of Kings and Emperours, a being in Sovereign authority; *fix your thoughts upon the noblest subsistences*, such, and infinitely more noble then such, is the subsistence.

fistence of God. With God is being, with him is the most glorious being, all the excellent beings that are scattered through the world, are summ'd up, and united in God, yea they are all but so many streams, and beams issuing from this *everflowing fountain and glorious Sun of being*. Fourthly, This word signifies also the rule, or the certain law of wisdom and judgment: Not only that wisdom which acts in man, but the rule by which that wisdom acts. The reason of government, or the measure by which all things are to be governed, lies in the bosome of this word. Here also another shining truth breaks forth from under the clouds of this expression; *With him is such wisdom as is the rule and measure of all things which are done in wisdom*. Job being to speak of great things God, that the *deceiver and deceived are his, that he looseth the bonds of Kings, &c.* had but need to put this preface to it, *with God is the measure, the reason of all things*.

Significat certam legem. & rationem ad quam omnia exiguntur. Mer. Cum ipso est Tuscijah & lux perpetua movens omnia secundum voluntatem suam Anteverterem. Rab. Abra. Peril.

Robore quidem valet, sed interim etiam certa lege & ratione ac aequitatis formula omnia gubernat. Prima justitie & juris Origas est optima & sanctissima Dei voluntas partim quia ipse optimus & sanctissimus est partim quia illi jus habet in omnia; quippe que ipsius sunt Coc.

Thus we have found these words in the Original, far more fruitful and extensive in sense, than those used for strength and wisdom at the 13th verse.

From the last interpretation, take this Note, *That the will of God, or God himself, is the rule of all things.*

God hath not a rule without him, but within him, it is himself. In this he differs from the best of men: Man hath a rule, but the rule is one thing, and the man is another; the law is one thing, and the King is another: But God and his rule are the same, his will and his law are himself, this renders him excellent in dignity, *The Lord over all*. Tyrants make their will their law, but what is their will? Their will is crooked, a leaden, Lesbian rule, which turneth and changeth, and will fashion it self to any occasion or emergency: their wills are distorted and turned this way and that way, even every way. And therefore it must needs produce tyranny for a man to make his will his rule, because his will hath not an everlasting rectitude and straitness in it. *But the Lord makes his will a law, and there is no tyranny, nothing but justice and equity in it.* It is impossible for any law to be made so strait as the will of God is, it is impossible to give a rule so holy as Gods will is. If we could have a supream Magistrate whose will were as holy, just, and good, as any law: It were reason his will should be the law: But this cannot be; therefore it is the prerogative of God alone, whose will is (as we have described) the Original of justice, and so more than a

law, which is but the measure of justice. *The counsels of God are without consultation, his decrees without deliberation: he hath all wisdom without study or experience, all knowledge and evidence of things without discoursing upon premises, or drawing down conclusions.* And whence is this? but because with him is this certain rule which cannot erre. The Pope challengeth to himself, that, though he may erre in his private actions as he is a man, yet as he is (in *Cathedra*) seated in the Apostolick Chair, as he is the Visible head of the Church, he cannot erre; his will is the rule: we see what rule it is, by the rules which it hath given. Who can say that is clean which brings forth an unclean thing, or strait and true, which brings forth that which is crooked and erroneous? Sinful actions speak sinful men, and his actions have been sinful enough to speak him (what is written of him) *The man of sin.* The actions of God have been so holy, that they declare him, *The holy God*, and his wayes so wise and just that they proclaim his wisdom to be the unerring rule of justice. *With him is strength and wisdom.*

Job having thus premised the unsearchable wisdom and insuperable strength of God, giveth a reproof of both in the next words,

III

Ignoravit

III

In Hiphil errare f. cit.

The deceived and the deceiver are his.

The deceived, is passive. A man misled through ignorance or inadvertency; *The deceiver, is active,* he consults and plots to catch the simple in his snare: Yet the word may signify also to seduce ignorantly, for as all are deceived through ignorance (he is not deceived who knows that he is) so some deceive through ignorance; supposing they give good counsel, and hold out the truth, when they are wrapt up in, and blinded with the darkness of error. And though most deceivers deceive knowingly, & intend to do the evil which they doe, yet ignorance causeth some to deceive, and did they know better they would not do so bad. But under what notion soever any man is deceived, or becomes a deceiver, the text entitles them both to God

Ex Hebraeis
multi per faci-
entem errare
satanam nimis
arctè intelli-
gunt.

The-deceived, and the deceiver are his.

I shall open two things about it.

1. Who are the deceived and the deceiver.
 2. In what sence they are said to be *his*, that is, the Lords.
- There are some who by the *deceiver*, understand the devil.

who

who is indeed *the great deceiver* and impoſtor: He wrote the firſt deceit in the world, and to deceive is his continual trade in the world. Men do but uſe deceit in their Trades and tranſactions, but the Devils trade and all his tranſactions are deceit. Yet we muſt not reſtrain and narrow up this Scripture to him only. God conſidereth that *great deceiver*, and all that are deceived by him. But *Job* diſcourſeth of men not of Devils, and then the deceivers and the deceived are of two ſorts.

1. In matters of Religion, or in ſpiritual things.
2. In matters of the world, or in civil things.

In matters of Religion, there is much deceiving, and many are deceived: Chriſt foretels it will be ſo (*Matth. 24. 24.*) *There ſhall ariſe falſe Chriſts, and falſe Prophets, and ſhall ſhew great ſignes and wonders, in ſo much that (if it were poſſible) they ſhall deceive the very Elect.* But though it be impoſſible for them to deceive the Elect, yet their attempt ſhall not be without too much ſucceſs. For, *Take heed* (ſaith Chriſt to his diſciples, Verſe. 4, 5.) *that no man deceive you for many ſhall come in my name, ſaying, I am Chriſt, and ſhall deceive many.* Their deceits ſhall proſper. *Paul* (*Tit. 1. 10.*) ſpeaks of deceivers who ſubvert *whole houſes*: Not by outward violence, but by cunning craftineſs, they overthrow their faith, and turn them from the truth: thus they deceived whole families.

Secondly, There is *The deceiver and the deceived* in civil things, or in matters of the world. And theſe are of two ſorts.

1. In commerce and trading: Thus we read (*Prov. 11. 1.*) *of the falſe ballance which is an abomination to the Lord.* And the Prophet *Micah* brings in the Lord diſdaining at theſe deceivers (*chap. 6. 11.*) *Shall I count them pure with the wicked ballances, and with the bag of deceitful weights? For the rich men thereof are full of violence, and the inhabitants thereof have ſpoken lies* (he means Exchange-lies, Warehouse-lies, Shop-lies, the lies of the ſeller, or of the buyer) *and their tongue is deceitful in their mouth.*

*Non ſolum
hec quæ loquitur
Ieb, de
ſeipſo ſed de omnibus
erroribus tum
in politiâ &
civitatibus re-
gendis, tum in
demo, &c.
Merc.*

2. In matters of government and policy, about which the greateſt deceits, and juggling, have been exerciſed in all the ages of the world. What crafty counſellours ſuggeſt, ſimple plain-hearted men are taken with, and often miſled to their own deſtruction. In *Absaloms* rebellion there went two hundred men out of *Jeruſalem* that were called, and they went in their ſimplicity, and they knew.

knew not any thing, namely, of Absaloms intent of aspiring to his fathers throne: *They were meerly catcht*, and surpris'd with his wilely insinuations. Polititians are skil'd to put fair vizards upon foul faces, and cover their wicked designs with honest pre-rences. These are *state-sophisters*, their study is to put fallacies and cheats upon the common people. All these deceivers, and they who are deceived by them, are comprehended under this general affirmation, *The deceived and the deceiver are his*.

How his?

87 The Hebrew is rendred, or rather paraphrased three waies. 1. *Ejus vel ei vel ab eo est errans* They are of him. 2. *To him*. 3. *From him*. We translate, *they are his*, and that may include all three. Yea there is a *five-fold his*, which I may hint to clear this point.

First, *His* by creation.

Secondly, *His* by possession.

Thirdly, *His* for use and service.

Fourthly, *His* by way of dominion or disposal.

Lastly, *His* by way of special affection and appropriation.

The two former of these are too little for the point: For, to say *the deceived and the deceiver are his*, by creation, is indeed to say nothing peculiar to this point: for so is the earth, and the sea, and the storms, and the winds, every thing is his, they are all Gods creatures. And secondly, to say *they are his by way of possession*, that he is the Lord and propriater of them, this also is too little, for so (Psal 50.) *All the beasts of the forrests are his, and the cattle upon a thousand hills*. To say no more of this deceiver, and the deceived, then you may say of the beasts of the field, or of the fowles of the air, or of the fishes in the sea, that the Lord is the maker and possessor of them, is below the purpose of Job, and the honour of God. And as these two are not enough, so the 5th way of being *his*, is too much, for *they are not his* by way of special affection and appropriation. That's too great a privilege for the deceiver and the deceived: for so only (among men) the Saints are his. These are Gods peculiars, and beloved ones, as he speaks of his people Israel, to Moses, Exod. 19. 5. *Now therefore if ye will obey my voice and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people, for all the earth is mine*. And though it be possible for many that are deceived, and for some who deceive at present, to be his, even in this way of special appropriation; yet this were too high

high a sense to give this text ; therefore we shall take the *his* in the third and fourth senses. *They are his*, that is, *his* to use, or he makes use of them : and *they are his* to dispose, that is, he disposeth and ordereth, both the deceiver and the deceived to his own righteous ends and holy purposes.

Both which may be more fully demonstrated, by these following interpretations.

First, *He knoweth them* : so the vulgar reads it, *he knoweth* *Ipse novit . vul.* the deceiver, or the deceiver is known to him, and so also is the deceived : as if he had said : *The Lord is acquainted with the deceiver, though he thinks that he walks in a mist, or is wrapt up in a cloud, though he flatter himself that no eye sees him ; yet whether he be a deceiver in matters of Religion, or in matters of trade and state-policy ; God knows what he is, he whose seven eyes run through the whole earth, sees him thorowly.* For when it is said that the Lord knows the deceiver, it is not meant only thus, that he knows his name or person, *there goes a deceiver, there's a false heart, there's a head full of errors and rotten principles,* but the Lord knoweth with what artifices and fetches, with what devices and projects, by what waies and engines, he compasseth and carrieth on the trade of deceiving. He knows also by what misrepresentations, false glosses, and semblances of truth, the deceived have been intrapt and drawn into the snare. To do this, is one of the highest acts of wisdom. To discern how, and wherein another had been deceived, shews as much soundness of understanding, as not to be deceived. Any fool commits or runs into error, only a wise man finds it out, *Eccles. 1. 17. I gave my heart to know wisdom, and to know madness and folly. Solomon studied as much to know folly, as to know wisdom. Only truth discovers falsehood, and right the wrong.*

*Novet quâ arte
quo astu fallit
decipiens, cujus
rei ignorantia
vel inanimad-
vertentia falsa
pro veris am-
plectitur errans
quod non nisi
per sapientiam
fieri potest.
Merit.*

Secondly, *The deceiver and the deceived are his*, sounds thus much, *That God will make them both to be accountable unto himself.* A master saith to his steward or servant, You shall give me an account of these actions and expences ; so saith God to the deceiver, and the deceived, you shall answer for what you have done ; you that deceive, shall be sure to pay for it ; and you that are deceived shall not escape a tryal and a censure, for your carelesness and your folly : you should have look'd better to it, 'twas your duty to prove all things, and to hold fast that which was good. Some are deceived in civil things, and are blameless ;

It is their affliction to be deceived, not their sin : but there is no man that is deceived in spiritual things, and is blameless, there it is every mans sin not to know his duty, and not to try before he approves. The same word in the Greek signifies both to prove, and to approve; implying that no man ought to approve any thing before he hath proved it. It is no honour to a man to approve that which is true, before he proves it : but he that approves an error before he hath any proof of it, runs himself into a double sin : First, of being deceived : Secondly, of not so much as considering whether he were or no. But which way soever a man is deceived, whether through ignorance or idleness, whether because he could not find the truth when he searcht for it, or because he would not be at the cost and pains to search for it, whether it were this or that by which he is deceived, God will reckon with him about it, much more then will he reckon with deceivers, whether they have deceived simply, or upon designe, though these last shall be deepest in condemnation. God will arraign all imposters and cheaters, all mountebanks and corrupters of truth, whether in spirituals or in civils; *They are all his*, and they shall stand before him to receive according to their deeds of darkness and deceit.

Neque permissioni tantum Domini hoc Scriptura tribuit, ut quidam putant, qui sapientioris spiritu sancto videri volunt. Merc. Job vult indicare divina providentia fieri, quod quidam errant, quidam vero alios decipiant & in errores inducant.

Thirdly, *The deceiver and the deceived are his*, that is (as some understand it) he permits and suffers deceiving and deceit to be in the world. It is from his sufferance that there are any such; This is a truth, though not all the truth; The Lord doth not will any deceit, yet there can be no deceit whether he will or no; it is possible, yea very easie for him to hinder both the deceiver and the deceived, but he is not obliged to do it, neither is he pleased to do it : he doth not alwayes give check to deceivers, nor doth he at all times set a bar in their way; He always hinders error morally, by declaring against it; but he doth not always hinder it powerfully and effectually by acting against it. Thus the deceiver and the deceived are his by permission, but this is not all, they are more his then thus. For,

Fourthly, *The deceiver and the deceived are said to be his, because he ordereth, and disposeth them*, he sendeth out deceivers, and giveth men up to be deceived. He is active in this dispensation, yet free from the least touch of pollution. He is not the author of the deceit, though he be the orderer and disposer of it. Mr. Calvin gives his judgement upon the place to this effect, roundly

roundly and clearly. To say (saith he) that God doth only permit men to deceive, and to be deceived, is a very cold expression, and speaks little, yea it is a derogation to the honour of God; for the Lord in infinite wisdom and holiness, disposeth of the errors of men, and of those that lead them into error.

There are four things, in which the providence of God moves to the ordering of this disorderly work of man.

1. He orders the persons, who shall deceive, and who shall be deceived; Hence it is said (*Mat. 24.*) that the false prophets, and the false Christs, arising in the later times, should (if it were possible) deceive the very elect. Then the elect are persons exempt; deceivers may distemper them, but they shall never poison them.

2. When or what time any shall deceive or be deceived, is also ordered by God. We read that satan was bound for a thousand years, that he should not deceive the nations (*Rev. 20.*) It was God that bound him, satan must be in a chain of divine providence a thousand years, and after that he must be loosed a little season. He that bound him loosed him, and as he bound him that he should not deceive, so he loosed him to deceive the Nations. But how doth satan deceive? Not immediatly by himself; the devil doth not come above-board (as we speak) he doth not walk in his own likeness, and appear as he is, that would terrifie men, rather then deceive them; but he acts by transforming himself into an angel of light. He stirreth up the spirits of men, to deceive, as he stirreth them up to vex and persecute those who will not be deceived: as the Devil is said to cast those witnesses of the truth into prison, who are imprisoned by men at his instigation (*Rev. 2. 10.*) so he is said to deceive and lead those into error, who are misled by men at his instigation. It was the Devil who filled the heart of *Ananias*, to vent a verbal lye; and the Devil fills the hearts of deceivers to vent and maintain doctrinal lies. The times of these deceivers are in the hand of God; he hath set down the term when they shall begin, and how long they shall continue their ensnaring Trade.

3. God orders how far any man shall deceive, or to what degree his deceit shall prevail. Hence the Apostle speaking of deceivers, men of corrupt mindes, reprobate concerning the faith, concludes, but they shall proceed no further (*2 Tim. 3. 9.*) as the maliciousness, so the deceivableness of men would know no

bounds, if God did not bound it. But because he doth, therefore though they would, yet they shall proceed no further. No man can do good till God assists him, and no man shall do hurt when God will stop him.

Thus far the Lord is active in ordering the deceiver, and the deceived. That Scripture is clear for it (1 King. 22. 22.) *Ahab was deceived, and the false prophets deceived him; Whence was it? The deceivers and the deceived were under the hand of God. Micajah spake it out plainly, as Ahab had desired (1 King. 22. 19, 20.) I saw the Lord sitting upon his Throne, &c. And the Lord said, who shall perswade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-Gilead? &c. And there came forth a spirit and stood before the Lord, and said, I will perswade him. And the Lord said, thou shalt perswade him, and prevail also; go forth, and do so. Now therefore (saith the Prophet) the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy Prophets. The Lord hath done it: He was active in it, yet full of holiness and truth in himself, as well as of justice and wrath against Ahab. Because Ahab hated the true Prophet, therefore he is given up to the teaching of false Prophets. Here was more then a bare suffering: God, as a Judge, put a lying spirit, as his Executioner, into the mouths of those lying Prophets. They who like not plain-dealing, are justly flattered into destruction. The Apostle speaking of that gross deception under which the Jews then lay, and still lye to this day; ascribes it to God by Scripture Authority, According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber; eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear unto this day (Rom. 11. 8.) And the Lord takes it upon himself in down right words (Ezek. 14. 9.) If the Prophet be deceived when he hath spoken a thing, I the Lord have deceived that Prophet. Not that the Lord did instill or infuse error into the Prophet, he is the God of truth, he is the author of truth, and therefore cannot be the author of error; he is the revenger of error, and therefore also he cannot be the abetter of it. Yet the Lord saith, I have deceived him. Observe (saith Calvin) God slinks not into a corner, saying I permitted it, and suffered it, I drew a curtain between me and the world, and let men do what they pleased. No, but he standeth in the open light, and saith, I have deceived that Prophet. The man of sin is prophesied coming with all deceiveable-ableness of unrighteousness, in them that perish, because they re-
ceived*

ceived not the love of the truth : For this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lye. The delusion is of their deserving, but of Gods sending : They deserve it because they never loved the truth, and God sends it because he ever loveth justice.

And as he sends these *spiritual delusions*, so he likewise sends *political delusions*. When a people are deceived and led away from the wholesome rules of government; when they have *State tricks* put upon them : We may conclude as the Prophet doth, when Egypt was seduced (Isa. 19. 14.) *The Lord hath mingled a perverse spirit in the midst thereof, and they have caused Egypt to erre in every work thereof.* Nations through the just judgement of God, run into error after error, and stagger like a drunken man in his vomit, till they fall into the pit, and into the snare of some utter desolation.

Further, *The deceiver and the deceived are his*; that is, the Lord improves both, to serve his own ends, to bring about his counsels, and promote his glory. We think nothing serves the ends of God, but the publication of truth; yes, the publishing and spreading of errors serve his ends too, and bring his purposes to pass. Carnal reason startles at this, and cannot make it out. But go into the sanctuary, and learn what this meaneth : remember *Jobs* preface, *With him is strength and wisdom*, and you will be satisfied. The preface makes the doctrine easie : and who is not convinced that there is infinite wisdom, and a strait rule in him, who can regulate the irregularity and crookedness, the errors and absurdities of man? Who can find out the depth of his wisdom, who is able to make such improvements out of folly, and give an advantage to truth, by the breaking out of falsity? Doth not the glory of God shine bright in this? The question is put by *Augustine*, in his 22. book of the *City of God*. Why doth not God remove and sweep sin and error out of the world? He answers, *It is better, and an act of greater power to make good out of evil, then not to suffer evil to be* : As it is one of the highest acts of grace in man, to render good for evil : so it is one of the highest acts of power in God to draw good out of evil. We may well conclude, *wisdom and strength are his*, whom the craft and skill of men to deceive, cannot circumvent, and whom the silliness and folly of men in being deceived cannot disappoint. In how clear a light doth God dwell, yea how clear a light is God, who makes

Hinc patet quod apud ipsum est sapientia. Nam qui superior est omni calliditate humana, atque providentiam habet deceptionum et errorum non potest esse nisi infinite sapiens. Pined.
Potentius est de malis etiam benefacere, quam mala esse non sinere. August.

his

his way without one wry step through all the mists & darknes of this world? It argues an infinite sovereignty in God, that he doth his work by that which seems to work against him. Deceivers do the work of God, though they intend nothing but their own.

For first, God would have his people tried, and he tries them by those who attempt to deceive them, (*Deut. 13. 1, 2.*) *If there arise among you a Prophet, that speaks unto thee, saying, let us go after other Gods, &c. Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that Prophet, for the Lord your God proveth you.* Here is the account which God gives, why he lets deceivers go abroad, and take their scope among his people. *It is to prove his people.* The Apostle gives the same reason (*1 Cor. 11. 19.*) *For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you.* It would never appear either what false principles corrupt the hearts and understandings of men, or what truth and sincerity are lodged there, if the Lord did not let out deceivers and false Prophets, to open their packs of lies in their sight or hearing.

Secondly, God would have us, not only hold truth, but be zealous for the truth, and *contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the Saints.* He therefore sends out some to oppose it. Some are busied in spreading deceits, that we may learn to be more busie in withstanding them, or more watchful in avoyding them. When we hear that there are *Cut-purses* in a crowd, every man looks to his purse; so when we hear that deceivers and impostors are in the Church, and that they come with such an effectualness of deceit, that if it were possible they should deceive the very elect, this must needs awaken all to look to themselves; will you not try what ye receive, when ye hear there are deceivers, and teachers of false doctrine are abroad, as well as teachers of the truth? and that there are *blinde guides*, as well as *Seers* gon forth? If nothing but truth could possibly be offered, our care and pains to prove what is offered might be spared: Neither would it be needful for us to pray unto Christ (the great Prophet) to keep us in his truth, but only to give us faith to receive, and wills to obey his truth. But seeing there are deceivers abroad, shall we not examine before we receive? shall we not weigh and try all in the balance of the Sanctuary, by the touchstone of the word ere we believe it.

If any ask, Why are so many misled into error, and poysoned with unwholesome doctrine? why doth not God preserve, and antidote all places against these infections? The Prophet *Ezekiel* hints us an answer (*chap. 14. v. 7.*) God punisheth one sin with another. When men continue in sins of practice, God lets them fall into sinful opinions. He justly blinds their eyes against his truth, who harden their hearts against his fear, *and put the stumbling block of their iniquity before their faces.* A second reason is given by the Apostle (*2 Thes. 2.*) He had said, *vers. 11. God shall send them strong delusion,* the reason follows, it is, *because they received not the love of the truth:* The understanding may submit, while the affections stand out. *It is easier to receive truth, then to receive the love of the truth.* And how much truth soever we receive without love to it, leaves us still under the wrath of God. The wrath of God is visible in his judgments, and this is judgement in perfection, *to be given up to strong delusions.* Those are the sorest punishments which are made of sins. They are punished with the belief of error, who love not truth. *False doctrines are fit plagues for false hearts.* And as they shall be beaten with many stripes, who know their Masters will and do it not, so also shall they who know it, and love it not; and indeed these and the former are the same. The reason why any doth not what he knows, is because he doth not love it, and he that loves it, will do it, for love is the fulfilling of the commandment.

By all it appears, how the *deceiver and the deceived are Gods.* Mr. *Broughton* hath put the summe of these several interpretations into his translation. *By him, and from him, and for him, are deceivers and deceived.* *From him,* that is, he sendeth them. *By him,* that is, he suffers and orders them. *For him,* that is they promote his glory, and serve his ends, either to try and discover who are faithful, or to punish those who are false.

Take one note by way of inference from the whole. *If the deceiver and the deceived are the Lords, then surely they who lead others into truth, and they that are led into truth, are his much more.* Truth-teachers, and truths receivers, yee, as, in the bosom of God, and are his by special approbation; They are to him as the apple of his eye, as his precious jewels. They are his scholars; he teacheth them; he teacheth those that teach truth, and they who learn truth are taught of him. The Lord feeds them
with

with knowledge and understanding. *He maketh them to lye down in green pastures* (of sound doctrine) *he leadeth them beside the still waters* of spiritual consolation. *He will open the gates of salvation, to a righteous nation who love the truth* (Isa. 26. 1.) They are his, and none shall pluck them out of his hands; they shall not be left, either to the cunning craftiness of deceivers, or to the rough violence of oppressours. And though such as publish and receive the truth may suffer for it, yet they shall never loose by it. Truth is such a commodity as never broke the buyer, what ever it cost him.

JOB Chap. 12. Vers. 17, 18, &c.

He leadeth Counsellours away spoiled, and maketh the Judges fools.

He looseth the bonds of Kings, and girdeth their loins with a girdle, &c.

JOB insisteth upon his former argument, to illustrate the power and wisdom of God. He had done it in natural things at the 15th verse, *He withholdeth the waters, and they dry up.* He did it in civil and spiritual things, at the 16th verse, *The deceived and deceiver are his.* In this context he enumerates more distinctly, the several sorts and degrees of men, whom the Lord by the wonderful administrations of his power and wisdom, sets up or casts down.

In the former verse we heard of deceivers in Religion, and of deceivers in policy: of *Church-deceivers*, and of *State-deceivers*. The instances given here are about the latter: we may call them *State-hereticks*, deceiving, or being deceived in the ministry of justice, to Kingdoms and Common wealths. And because the intent of Job is to shew the mutations of States and Kingdoms, therefore he speaks of those who are the chief supporters, the most eminent pillars of States and Kingdoms. Of these he names, 1. *Counsellors*. 2. *Judges*. 3. *Kings*; in whose miscarriages whole Kingdoms miscarry.

*Versibus his
quinq; describi-
tur Monarchici
status Lab. fa-
tatio atq; ever-
sio, Mert.*

It

It is here observable in general, that *Job* being to describe the providences of God in the world, doth not meddle with small matters, as what God doth to a private person, or single families; but he deals in those which are most eminent, the transmutations of Kingdoms, which fall within the observation of the whole world. If a particular man be undone or ruined, his next Neighbour takes notice of it, but it is scarce known in the next village: But when Kingdoms are ruined, all States and Kingdoms ring of it, such events are the talk and wonder of the Nations round about.

Affert rara & extraordinaria quæ Deus facit, ut his tremendis operibus & judicijs veterum a nobis excutiat. Merc.

Secondly, He doth not instance in the founding and establishing of Kingdoms; wherein yet the wisdom and power of God are very glorious; but in their destruction and putting down. And the reason is, because we take greater notice of God in pulling down, than we do in building up; we observe him more when he killeth, than when he maketh alive; his withdrawals are more noted than his presence, and we are more sensible of our privations, than of our enjoyments. The Sun is more looked at in an Eclipse, than when it shineth with purest lustre.

Further, He giveth instance in these, because we are apt to cast the miscarriages of Kingdoms upon second causes. It was the pride of such, the envy of others, the ambition of a third sort, or the unfaithfulness of a fourth, which undid all; we seldom look up to the hand of God, while we complain so much of men. In all changes here below, *Job* carrieth our thoughts directly to God, *He leadeth Counsellors away spoiled*: Do not stay enquiring how weakly Counsellors advised, or how foolishly Judges gave their sentence, it is God that doth all these things, *He leadeth Counsellors away spoiled, and maketh the judges fools, &c.* More distinctly,

He leadeth.

The Hebrew is, he makes them go, he makes them go whether they will or no: he leadeth them from the height of their dignity, into a despised condition. No man hath any mind to such a motion.

Counsellors.

Counsellors (as the word is ordinarily taken) are such as give advice in publike affairs; *They chaulk out the way for action*;

M m

that's

מְלִיצִים
Ire faciens.
Consulere, decernere, delibere. Consiliarius est qui sibi ipsi vel aliis dat rationem agendi.

that's the proper work of Counsel; Counsel is to lay the designe, and to cut out the means, how busineses are to be carried, how to be managed, then others are called to execute. *Counsel tables order the affairs of the whole world*: they give the rule, and draw the method, they appoint the instruments and set the time how all shall be done. A Counsellor is like the Pilate at the Helm, steering the vessels course (*Prov. 11 14.*) *Where no counsel is the people fall, but in the multitude of Counsellors there is safety.* Hence when Job would set forth the destruction of a people, he tells us that God *leadeth Counsellors*

Away spoiled.

διὰ τὴν βελ-
τὰς αἰ'χ-
μαλώτες.
Sept.
Ducit consul-
tores captivos.

The Hebrew is variously interpreted. The Septuagint saith, *He leadeth them away as captives.* Then the sense riseth thus, That the Lord takes the wise Counsellors of the earth, as Prisoners in War; when they in their counsels and designs have set themselves against his Throne and Kingdome, when they have been devising devices against his people; then the Lord comes out with his Army, conquers them, and leads them captive. When Christ ascended up on high (*Psal. 68. 18.*) *He led captivity captive*, or, *He captivated captivity*; that is, he led those captive who had captivated his people, or he led his people, who were miserable captives to Satan, into a blessed captivity, to himself. And as he led *captivity captive*, so he can *lead liberty captive*, making those who enjoyed the greatest liberty, even *Counsellors themselves, his captives.*

There are three ways in which this leading Counsellors spoiled and captivated may be understood.

De gradu dig-
nitatis deiecit.
Druſ.

First, *Spoiled of their honour and reputation.* It is as easie as it is usual with the Lord, to *spoil those of honour in the World, who use their counsels and their power against those whom he honours.* It is as great an affliction to cast them out of the hearts of men, (especially of good men) as out of their estates. *The hand of God is in nothing more visible then in making them a detestation among men, who were the delight of men.* Honour is one of the richest spoils that can be taken from any man, especially from Counsellors; who always do as much with their reputation, as with their reason, and can do nothing with all their reason, when once they have lost their reputation.

Secondly, *He leadeth them away spoiled of their hopes and expectations,*

peccations, spoiled of the booty and of the prey which they designed to themselves; they thought of rich advantages by spoiling others, but they are led away spoiled. To which sence the words are well expounded, *He doth cast the wise men of this world from their wished end*: They who presumed and promised themselves great spoils, become a spoil. *Eliphaz* treateth at large of this point (*Chap. 5. 12.*) *He disappointeth the devices of the crafty, so that their hand cannot perform their enterprise.*

*Sapientes hujus
seculi oprato fi-
ne deiecit Pin.*

Thirdly, These Counsellours are often spoiled, not only of their honour and credit, of their ends and hopes; but also of their wits and wisdom. They whose wits and wisdom continue as high and quick as ever, may yet be disappointed in their counsels, and loose both their ends and honour: But the Lord doth sometimes spoil the wise of wisdom, and knowing men of understanding. The Hebrew Doctors delight most in this Interpretation, *He preyeth upon the wisdom of the wise*; they think themselves able to outreach and outpolicy all the world: Yet God blasts their gifts, and darkens their understandings, he puts them out of their wits, and makes their judgments injudicious. He gives them up (as he did those Gentiles, who waxed vain in their Imaginations, *Rom. 1. 28.*) *To a reprobate mind*, to an unjudging, or an unapproving spirit. They who knowingly put darkness for light, and light for darkness, evil for good and good for evil, wrong for right, and right for wrong, shall do it at last for want of knowledge. *They who act against their light, shall not have light to act by.* And as some Counsellours are thus spoiled for a punishment to themselves, so not a few were spoiled that they may be a punishment to others. For this cause they are disabled to resolve what is safe for a people, and what is unsafe, what may be for their uniting, or what for their dividing, what for the settling, or what for the disturbing of affairs. (*Psal. 75. 5.*) *The stout hearted are spoiled*; so we read, but some translate, *They are spoiled of their stout heart*: The stout hearted the strong are spoiled; the strong man may be spoiled by a stronger: that's a good sence, but it is more elegantly rendred, *They are spoiled of their stout heart*, that is, the Lord takes their heart out of their bosom. Daring men, who fearing nothing, are turned into *Magor-missa-bibs*, fear round about; their stout hearts are taken from them; and then, they are so far from being a terror to other men, that they run from the shadow of a man: Their courage is

*Hebraei spolia-
tos mente &
judicio expo-
nunt. Meic.*

*Adducit sapi-
entes in præ-
dam scientiæ:
i. e. eorum sapi-
entiam quasi
prædam &
spolia diripit.
Rab. Moys.*

*Spoliati sunt
fortes corde.
q. d. privati a-
nimo animosi-
tate & fortitu-
dine.*

Ἰδὺντες βέλους
 τῶν ἐκείνων αἰσ-
 χάν. Symach.

down, they cannot give a Child a confident look, much less look dangers or enemies in the face. Now, as the Lord spoils Souldiers and Warriours of their stout hearts, so he spoileth Counsellors of their cunning and politick hearts, of their wise hearts, *The politick hearts are spoiled, or they are spoiled of their politick hearts.* Rabbi Moses (as was noted) readeth this Text so, *He bringeth wise men into a spoil of their wisdom*, that is, he takes their wisdom as a prey: and as a man that is spoiled, is sent away without a penny in his Purse, or a Garment upon his back, so these wise Counsellors are sent away without any wit in their heads, or prudence in their breasts. One of the Greek Translators, (both the Hebrews and the Greeks joyne in this sence) gives it thus, *He leadeth away Counsellors to uncounselableness*, or he leadeth them away (saith another) *into Penury or Poverty of counsel*, they have not so much as a penny worth of counsel about them, if one should come to ask it of them. The Vulgar Latine comes near this sence, rendering thus, *He leadeth the Counsellors into a foolish end*, or, *into a foolish conclusion of their business*; that is, he brings their counsels to such an end, that they shall be accounted fools and unwise men, by all men of wisdom.

Adducit ut
 pradam. Tyg.

These three ways we may understand this Text, that God *leadeth Counsellors away spoiled*. All which are wrapped up in a fourth, he brings them into straits and difficulties, like captives in Chains, and so drags them after the Chariot of his triumphing Providence, drawn by *his own infinite wisdom and strength*. And thus they become a spectacle of scorn or pity to all beholders.

Further, Consider that these Counsellors may be of two sorts. First, Such as give evil counsel against a Kingdom or State, these are usually led away spoiled of their honour, and of their hopes, of their ends, yea and of their wits. Secondly, Such as give good counsel, and that with all their might and the best of their understanding, yet, even these are sometimes led away spoiled of all. So that though they would, yet they shall not be able to direct or deliver those that trust them and depend upon them.

Hence Observe,

First, *A Spirit of Counsel is the gift of God*

It is a special gift of God to be able to give good Counsel, it is

is a great gift of God, to be willing to receive good counsel. I scarce know which is the greater, to be willing to receive good counsel, or to be able to give it. Many can give good counsel, who will not receive it : To give or to receive *are the gifts of God.*

Secondly Observe,

Kingdoms and States fail, when Counsels fail.

Jobs scope is to shew the alterations that are in Kingdoms : now as by the majesty of Kings, the wisdom of Counsellors, the prudence of Judges, the eloquence of Orators, and valour of Souldiers, Kingdoms flourish and are established ; so by the taking away or decay of these, Kingdoms decay and come to nothing, or to that which is *next to nothing, a Chaos of confusion.* This judgment is threatned (*Isa. 3. 4.*) *In that day the Lord will take away from Jerusalem, the stay and the staff, the whole stay of Bread, and the whole stay of Water.* There is a twofold staff of a people, there is a *natural staff*, and there is a *civil staff* ; the natural staff is bread and water, which by a *Senechdoche* are put for all the necessary supports of a natural life. The removal of these is ruine ; yet God when he intends ruine, takes away other sties besides these. The same Prophet proceeds in this sad Narrative. *He will take away also the mighty man, and the man of War, the Judge and the Prophet, and the Prudent, and the Ancient, the Captain of fifty, and the Honourable man, and the Counsellor.* Thus the Lord takes away the *civil staff and stay* of a people, that is, men inabled for publike services. And when these foundations of humane Society are out of course, or removed out of place, down comes the Roof and highest Pinnacles of the most potent Commonwealths. For as *when vision*, that is, the word preached, *faileth, the people perish* ; (the preaching of the word is called a vision, either because the word was received by vision from God, or because in it, the Lord is seen and his truth is discovered to us.) Now (I say) as when this vision faileth, the people perish, that is, their Souls perish, the spiritual part perisheth, they perish in the capacity of a Church : So when counsel fails, the people perish in their civil capacity, as they are a politike State or Common-wealth. Learn hence, what need we have to pray for the maintenance of these staves. God in judgment may lead our Counsellors away spoiled, and then we are spoiled.

Thirdly Observe,

The ruine of Kingdoms is not from chance and fortune, but by the decree and purposes of God.

He leadeth Counsellours away spoiled, He in mercy giveth Counsellours, to establish and preserve Kingdoms, and when either Counsellours abuse their wisdom, or when a people abuse the blessings which God giveth, or hath restored to them by their Counsels, then he takes them away, He spoileth the Counsellours that the people may be spoiled. We sometimes wonder that Counsellours have no more wisdom, we should rather be humbled that our selves have no more goodness; Usually a people are first spoiled of goodness, before Counsellours are spoiled of wisdom to give advice, or are succesless in what they advise. If God doth this we cannot complain: When he gives Counsellours, he is not indebted to doe it; and when he takes them away he is provoked to doe it; he takes them not away whilst good counsels are received, or while we are thankful to him for the good we receive by counsel. When the Lord would destroy Egypt, he spoiled the Counsellours of Egypt (Jer. 19. 11, 12, 13.) *Surely the Princes of Zoan are fools, the counsels of the wise Counsellours of Pharaoh is become brutish; How say ye unto Pharaoh, I am the Son of the wise, the Son of ancient Kings?* The Prophet discovers their degeneracy from their Ancestours. And whence was all this? Was this from the turning of fortunes Wheel, as Heathens used to speak? No, vers. 17. *Because of the counsel of the Lord of Hosts, which he hath determined against it.* The Lord had a counsel, and his counsel was against Egypt, therefore the counsel of the wise shall not help Egypt: For the Princes of Zoan shall become fools, and the counsel of the wise Counsellours of Pharaoh brutish. When the most proper means of safety cannot save, nothing can. And though Counsellors themselves continue wise, yet they shall have no better success than fools. *Achitophels* counsel was in an ill matter, yet it was the best counsel that could be given to facilitate the ends of *Absalom*, but the Lord turned it into foolishness: The event is the same, whether God turn (as he did *Achitophels*) wise counsel into foolishness, or (as it follows in this Text) *the wisest Counsellors into fools*; both these are alike easie to God and fatal unto man.

And

And he makes the Judges fools.

Some expound this as a Repetition of the former clause. *A Counsellor may also be a Judge*; so they are co-incident terms. But rather take them distinctly, for here are three Officers specified: First, He who is supream, *the King*: Secondly, They who are subordinate, *the Judge*, and the *Counsellor*. Now as *He leadeth Counsellors away spoiled*, so *he makes the Judges fools*.

The Judge (as distinguished from the Counsellor) is one who administreteth justice according to Law; Judges are servants to the Law, and Rulers to the people, Gen. 19. 9. This fellow came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a Judge; he will govern and give us the rule, he will take upon him to teach us what to doe, say the Sodomites to Lot. After the death of Joshua, the supream Magistrate in Israel was called a Judge, till Saul was elected King. Here the Judge is a subordinate Magistrate, placed under Kings.

UDU

Ita significat
ut idem sit
quod regere,
vemp. admini-
strare leges &
jura prescri-
bere.

He makes the Judges fools.

Not by any positive act, infusing folly. But God may be said to make Judges fools, two ways. First, By not enlightning their understandings, and leaving them in the dark. Secondly, By overreaching their understanding, and outwitting them in the light. It is usual amongst us, to say, of a very wise man; *He will make such a one a very fool if he deal with him*: Not that he puts folly into the man, or withdraweth wisdom from him, but he doth so much overmatch and overpoise him in parts, that when he deals or argues with him, he will appear but a child or a very fool. Those Israelites that went to search the Land of Canaan were doubtless no Dwarfs, yet when they saw the huge Sons of Anak, they looked on themselves like Grass-hoppers. A tall man is but low of stature; A rich man but poor; A wise man but a fool in comparison of him who greatly excels in stature, riches or wisdom. We may take this Text either of a privative act, the Lord withdraws and with-holds the light, so that the Judge cannot see the rule of the Law, and then (like a fool) he errs in judgment; or of a superlative act, for though the Judge retain his light yet the Lord makes a fool of him. Who can tell how much the wisdom of God exceeds the wisdom of man, when the Apostle

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tells

tells us, that *the foolishness of God is wiser than man?* 1 Cor. 1. 25. *I the foolishness of God* (namely that which vain men count foolishness) *be wiser than men*, then surely the wisdom of God will soon make the wisest among men fools indeed.

Again, *Job* doth not say, *He makes fools Judges*; that the Lord doth sometimes (*Isa. 3. 4.*) *I will give Children to be their Princes, and Babes shall rule over them*: The Prophet speaks not of Children in age, for *Josiah was a childe*, and but eight yeers old, yet a great blessing to the Kingdom of *Judah*, but he means children in understanding. The fore-thought of that troubled *Solomon*, *Eccles. 2. 19.* *I hated all my labour which I had taken under the Sun* (saith he) *because I should leave it unto the man that shall be after me, and who knoweth whether he shall be a wise man or a fool?* *Rehoboam* proved a foolish Prince. Now as God to punish a people makes fools Judges, so which is more, *He maketh Judges fools*, let them be as wise as they will, he outwitteth them, and catcheth them in their own devices.

Judices in stuporem, Vulg. in pavorem, Sept. in conturbationem mentis.

The Vulgar Latine reads it thus, *He brings the Judges into astonishment, or amazement.* The Septuagint, *He brings them into fear and trembling*: Both note the same thing, that the Lord casts them into a consternation of spirit, and then they fall upon erroneous and foolish determinations. (*Isa. 19. 14.*) *He minglith a perverse spirit in the midst of them.* They turn giddy, or are giddy with turning, and know not well what to do, or which way to resolve.

Hence Observe,

First, *That the wisest men are not always wise.*

God can make Judges fools. As wisdom is the gift of God, so is the continuance of it: And unless we receive a supply of wisdom from God, we shall quickly turn fools, and do things rather like mad men, than like men of reason and understanding. *We want daily wisdom for our daily work, as much as we do daily bread for our daily wants.*

Secondly, *Failings in judgment are in judgment from God, or, God in judgment makes men fail in judgment.*

It is a high judgment of wrath, to disable men from judging in reason.

This God doth, both to punish the sins of Judges, and of those from whom they judge. When a people trust in the wisdom of their Judges, when they make them god, of whom God hath only

only said, ye are Gods; Then God makes them lesse then men. (Añ. 12.) When Herod made an Oration, the people cryed, *The voice of God and not of man.* Though Judges should give glory to God, as Herod did not, and so was consumed of worms, yet, God may send a worm into the counsels and resolutions of the Judges, and eat them out, because of such cries among the people.

Lastly, It is matter of comfort to consider, that the Lord can make Judges fools: That as Mr Broughton translates this verse) *He brings Counsellours to badness, and Judges to stark madness.* We need not fear what wise men act against us, while the only wise God acteth for us.

Job goes on, and gives an higher instance then in Judges and Counsellours.

[Verse 18. *He looseth the bond of Kings, and girdeth their loins with a girdle.*

He looseth.

The Hebrew is, he openeth or untieth the boud of Kings.

The bond.

The word signifies, any thing that knitteth or holdeth together. Sometimes it is put for discipline and correction; The Greek expresseth instruction and correction, both the parts of discipline, by one word.

We may take this *bond* two waies. First, Passively, and secondly, Actively.

First, Passively, and then by the bonds of Kings, are understood those bonds wherewith Kings are bound. So the Chaldee paraphrast translates: *He bringeth Kings from bonds to the Throne,* that is, Kings who have been bound, captivated, and brought very low, he raiseth up again: The Septuagint runs upon that sence, *placing Kings in their thrones;* as speaking of those Kings who had been put out, or put off from their thrones; these the Lord re-inthrones, or sets up again.

And then in correspondency to that understanding of the word [*bond*] the latter clause of the verse [*and girdeth their loins with a girdle*] is to be understood in a good sence. He giveth them strength and honour, he setteth their affairs and

אֲרָדָא arad.
רָבָד
Quod est con-
stringere aut
ligare vinculo
aut quacunq; in-
structione aut
arctiore disci-
plina, quam
Graeci πειρασμα
vocant.

καταδύσαντες βα-
σιλεῖς ἐν θρό-
νοις. Sept.
Catenam regum
solvit, q. d.
envinculis eos
vehit ad reg-
num. Tharg.

N n

crowns,

crowns, after greatest shakings and depressions. A *BOND* is for punishment, a girdle is both for strength and ornament. A girdle is the emblem of power, and to gird a man is as much as to give him power: So that when it's said, *he girdeth their loins with a girdle*, the meaning is (according to the sense given of the former clause) he strengtheneth them in their Kingdome, State and government, and restores them the obedience of their people; thus the phrase is used (Isa. 45. 5. concerning Cyrus, *I girded thee though thou hast not known me; that is, I set thee upon the throne, I established thee, and confirmed thee, I put thee into that high condition, though thou little thoughtest that it was I who did it.* There is a profitable truth in this interpretation. *Kings are delivered from bonds, and set upon their thrones by the special providence and power of God,*

But if we view this text with the context more strictly; the scope of the whole lodges our thoughts in another sense. For Job is setting forth the judgment of God upon Kingdomes, in the judgments which he brings upon *Councillours, Judges, and Kings.* Therefore we cannot with any subtilties to the context (though the thing be in it self a truth) understand it of a work of deliverance, in loosing the bonds of Kings, and re-estating them upon their thrones. Here then we must take the word *bond*, actively, and so we may expound it two waies.

Active vinculum quo illi alios vinciunt, significat sepe tyrannide aut impotenti regum dominacione liberari subditos dum jugum excutiant & potestate tyranni excedunt. Merc.

First, for those *bonds* with which Kings illegally bind their people. Such are the bonds of oppression and tyranny: And so the meaning of, *He looseth the bonds of Kings*, is this; God by his mighty power breaks, or by his wisdom unlooses those bonds of oppression, with which Kings attempt to enslave their people; such were the bonds of *Rehobaham*, whose resolution was (though it was a rash one) to bind his people in bonds; and when they petitioned him, complaining of heavy burthens laid upon them in his fathers dayes, praying that now his yoke might be made easier; Easier? saith he, nay it shall be made heavier, *whereas my father made your yoke heavy, I will add to your yoke; my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions, my little finger shall be heavier than my fathers loines.* I will publish such Edicts, and put out such proclamations, as shall be so many chains, bonds and fetters upon you, to tye you faster, and hold you closer in subjection than ever you were to this day. This sort of bonds, the Lord breaks, he looseth the *oppressing bonds*

bonds of Princes. When they aſſe the Tyrant, not the King, and inſtead of ruling, vex a people, when they will not let their ſubjects enjoy ſuch liberty as becomes men or Chriſtians, then he looſeth their bonds. Kings and people too, join ſometimes (though in vain) to break the bonds of God. (Pſal. 2. 1, 2) *Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The Kings of the earth ſet themſelves, and the Rulers take counſel together; And what is it upon? It is this, Come let us break their bonds aſunder, and caſt away their cords from us: What? Will Chriſt ſubdue us to his laws? Will he lay bonds upon us, and make us ſlaves under the ſcepter of his government? Come, let us break theſe bonds, and caſt theſe cords from us, let us get out our necks from this yoke, and our ſhoulders from theſe burdens. We are a free people, our tongues and our conſciences are our own, who is Lord over us? Thus people and Kings conſpire to looſen the bonds which Jeſus Chriſt the King of Saints, and King of Nations chargeth upon them for their good: they will not abide ſuch bonds, not they, but they muſt, for they do but imagine a vain thing. But when Kings and Princes out of the pertinaciouſneſs and pride of their ſpirits, or out of an ungoverned reſolution in government, ſay that they will lay bonds, and tributes, impositions and ſervices upon their people, which make them groan; then the Lord takes counſel in heaven (and it is not in vain) I will break their bonds, (ſaith he) and caſt their cords off from you, and he doth it. As Sampſon brake the withs and bonds wherewith the Philiftines bound him, ſo doth God thoſe, wherewith his people are bound, as a threed, as a threed of tow is broken, when it toucheth (or as the Hebrew is) ſmelleth the fire. Thus he wrought for his holy Name, and for his people in Egypt Pharaoh ſaid to his wiſe Counſellours, Come, *Let us work wiſely*, let us make bonds for this people, and bring them into perpetual ſervitude; they were firſt commanded to make brick, and then compelled to make brick without ſtraw, they ſerved with Rigour. Here were bonds, but God looſened them, and by a mighty hand and ſtretched out arm, delivered his people, drowning Pharaoh in the red Sea. Thus the bond of that King was looſened; and ſo were thoſe of Rehobaham; for while he (as was toucht before) prepared bonds for his People, and thought he could never make them ſlaves enough, God in judgment ſtirred up another King, and ten*

tribes of twelve departed from his obedience, and never returned again; neither did God permit *Rehoboham* to proceed in his attempt for the reducing of them, but took the revolt upon himself, saying plainly by the mouth of his Prophet, *This thing is from me*, 1 King 12.24. Thus the bonds of that King were loosened, and himself was brought into straits, while he endeavoured unjustly to straiten those in whose just liberties he should have rejoiced. Those are the freest Kings who govern a free People, and the more free a people are, the more are they truly subject. Slavery doth either embase the spirits of a people, or heightens them to disobedience. *Oppression makes a wise man mad, but none are so mad as oppressors, how wise soever they seem to be.* When their bonds are loosed (as they shall) they loose more then they could get, should they continue fastned.

Secondly, As Kings have *oppressing bonds*; so governing bonds. Wholesome lawes are the peoples bonds, and it is both their duty and their liberty to be thus bound. *It is a far greater bondage to be under no laws, then to be under hard ones.* When every man doth that which is right in his own eyes, there is scarce any man will be found either doing or enjoying that which is right. Therefore let people take heed, lest while they complain of the bonds of oppression, that they do not throw off the bonds of subjection: Yet thus also God looseth the bonds of Kings: He in Judgment to Kings and Kingdoms, leaves a people to forget their duty, and to withdraw from due obedience.

The Vulgar translateth, * *He unbuckleth or dissolveth the belt of Kings*; which is glossed to this sense; || *he diverts them of regal power.* The belt was alwaies a mark of honour, and some of the Learned observe that it was anciently an emblem of Kingly power. And so the unloosing of it must imply the taking away of that power. * The belt is taken here by others for the emblem of a souldiers power only, not of a Kings. Hence girding or putting on the belt, is as much as preparing for war: *Gird up now thy loins like a man*, saith God to Job (chap 38.3.) when he challenged him to a dispute, which is a verbal war. (Psal. 93.1.) *The Lord reigneth, he is clothed with majesty, the Lord is clothed with strength, wherewith he hath girded himself.* David giving charge to Solomon upon his death-bed concerning Joab, who had been his chief Commander, or the Generalissimo of his forces, saith, *he put the bloud of war upon his girdle* (or the belt, so

Pagnine

* Baltheum regum dissolvit. Vulg.

|| *Authoritatem & imperium illis adimit.* Mer. In Baltheo regnantis intelligitur gloria, in fune vero è regno dpositi ignominia Hieron. Aureus Baltheus insigne fuit regum, clarissimiq; magistratus, quare spoliari cingulo dicebantur qui magistratu & dignitate privabantur. Pin.

* Baltheus non fuit insigne regale sed militare. Bold,

Pagnine translates) that was upon his loins (1 King. 26.) Christ himself (Isa 11.5) is described, having Righteousness the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins, that is, coming forth girded, or belted about as a victorious Conquerour, with righteousness and faithfulness. That's the meaning of that cooling message (1 King 20.11.) Let not him that girdeth on his harness, boast himself as he that putteth it off; that is, do not sing *Victoria* before the battle; the event of war is uncertain. And it was usual, when commission Officers of Armies were cashiered and turned off, for any misdemeanour, to take away their belt. There is a famous story in *Suidas* about it, of one *Auxensius* a great Commander under *Lycinius* the Emperour; He reports, that when *Lycinius* came into the Court of his palace, where there was a great bath and some vines growing about it, with the image of *Bacchus* set up among the vines: The Emperour bad *Auxensius* draw his sword and cut of a bunch of grapes, which as soon as he had done, he commanded him to offer it at the feet of *Bacchus*, which was as much as to acknowledge him to be a god; *Auxensius* answered, I am a Christian, I will not do it: What? not do it upon my command, saith the Emperour, then you must quit your place; with all my heart, Sir, said the Christian souldier, and in token of it, put off his belt, which was as much as the giving up of his commission, and went away with joy in that suffering for Christ.

Noli cavere triumphum ante victoriam, nondum deposuisti arma nondum pace potiris.

Absit Imperator, Christianus enim ego sum igitur apage relicta militiam (inquit *Lycinius*) at hic nihil cunctatus solvizonam & statim alacer palatin excessit. *Sui in Auxensio.*

According to this translation and use of the word, he looseth the bond and belt of Kings, the sign is put for the thing signified; and the meaning riseth thus. God casteth down Kings, not only from their sovereignty and regal power, but from their military power. He takes not only their crown from their head, and their scepter out of their hand, but the belt and sword from their loins: So that as their people refuse to give them any willing subjection, so they are disabled to compel them.

Non solum regali diademate illos eruit sed etiam Baltheo quod est simplicis militis insignis, i.e. illuc eos abiecit, ut nec militis quidem nomine digni reputentur. Bol

Hence Observe,

Kings are in the hand of God, to set up and to cast down as himself pleaseth.

By me (saith God) Kings reign and Princes decree justice, Prov. 8. 15. and when Princes refuse to decree justice, God can say it, and effect it, ye shall not reign. (Isa. 45. 1.) Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to *Cyrus*, whose right hand I have holden to subdue Nations before him, and I will loose the loines of Kings, &c.

N n 3

God

God set up Cyrus King to put down Kings; yet he saith, *I will loose the loins of Kings.* Cyrus was the instrument, but both the design and the success was of God. Kings cannot make bonds so fast either to strengthen themselves, or strait their people as God can loose them. There are four bonds which the Lord usually looseth, when he chastens the pride and sin of Kings.

First, The bonds of their *authority*, that their word is not revered nor received as before. *Where the word of a King is* (saith Solomon) *there is power*: Yet when God is angry, he can render their word powerless.

Secondly, He looseth the bonds of their *riches and revenues*: Riches are a strength to Kings; Riches are the support, as well as the fruit of peace; And they are the sinews of war: When treasure is gone, power staies not long behind. *Money answers all things*; and when that failes, Princes seldom receive contentful answers. God sends a moth upon the publike treasure, and that eats asunder many bonds and obligations.

Thirdly, Which is stronger than the former two, God looseth the bond of a peoples love and affection unto Kings. *Love is the bond of obedience, both to God and man*. Princes sit fastest in the affections of their people. That King who hath the hearts of his subjects, hath their hands and their purses too at command. *Jehoram* out-lived, or rather never lived in the love of his people, and he dyed undesired (2 Chron. 21. 20.) *Some have said, let them hate while they must fear: but that fear is safest which springs from love.*

Oderint dum
metuant.

Fourthly, The Lord looseth the bond of their *leagues, alliances and confederacies with forreign nations*. They shall not stand fast by covenants with men, who break the covenant of their God. Through this judgment of God, Kings have been oftner entangled, than strengthened with leagues. Those leagues and alliances spoken of by *Daniel* (chap. 11.) between the Kings of the North and of the South, proved snares to catch, rather than helps to uphold one another.

These bonds, or what bonds else soever, the Kings of the earth make, either to support themselves, or oppress their people, are loosed by the power of God. As there is no bond of God so strong, but the heart of man will attempt to break it; so there is no bond of man so strong, but the hand of God can break it, *He looseth the bonds of Kings,*

And girded their loines with a girdle.

In the first interpretation of the former clause; *This girding of the loines of Kings with a girdle*, was taken in a good sence namely, for the strengthening of their State. But in pursuance of the second interpretation, which hath appeared most agreeable to this text, *The girding their loines with a girdle*, under goes a very different consideration, and may be taken two waies.

First, As a girdle is opposed to a belt. A girdle is of ordinary use, a common part of clothing: Every man weareth a girdle, but every man doth not wear a belt, that hath somewhat of honour in it. And so the sence is this, he looseth the belt of Kings, and takes off their sword, so that they cannot carry on their wars: And then, *He girdeth their loines with a girdle*, that is, he brings them into a low or common condition.

Secondly, A girdle, and girding with it, signifies, not only a common, but a servile, or captivated condition. So some expound the words here, as an allusion to that custome which was amongst the *Persians*: (one of the Rabbins is clear for it, and frames his comment upon that notion.) The Kings of *Persia* were wont to gird those with a girdle whom they had taken captive; and they ministred unto, and attended those great Kings, being girt with a girdle. Now, That to be girt about the loins is a posture of service, is clear also in Scripture, being a metaphor taken from the usage of the Eastern countries, where, wearing long garments, they girded them in all preparations for travail or labour. *Gird up the loins of your mindes* (saith the Apostle, 1 Pet. 1. 13.) that is, be in a readiness to serve the Lord. When Christ went to wash his Disciples feet, *Job 13. He took a towel and girded himself*. And when he would shew how blessed those servants shall be whom their Lord when he cometh shall find watching; He tels them (*Luk. 12. 37.*) *Verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them*. And again when he would prove that no man by all his watchfulness and diligence, can deserve any thing at the hand of God; He puts a query, *Luk. 17. 78 Which of you having a servant plowing or seeding cattle, will say unto him, when he is come from the field, go and sit down to meat, and will not rather say unto him, make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thy self and serve me, &c.* According to this ap-

Per cingulum aliqui vires innunt, cingulo enim lumbi praecingantur in quibus virum sedes & roboris. Drus.

Habitus hominis abjectissimi ut opponitur Baltheo, qui reges ornat. Pined.

Cingulum perzonam exponitur, qua solebant praecigni, qui regibus Persarum ministrabant, & quod duces exercitus Israelitarum ante reges Persarum ministrantes accirgebantur. Merc. ex Rambam.

proved

q d. *Commutat
eos in famulos.*

Druf.

*Præcingit fune
lumbas eorum,*

*Funis nomine
vilis zone de*

notatur qua

plebeia conditi-

onis homines

*uti solent. Bold.
Pro zona su-*

niculus.

proved use of the phrase, *Jobs* sence is this, *He looseth the bonds of Kings, and girdeth their loins with a girdle*, that is, they who ruled others, are forced to obey, and from commanders are turned into servants: So low the Lord hath sometimes cast the mightiest and highest Princes of the world.

The Vulgar translaeth yet more low, *He girdeth their loins about with a rope*, which is the meanest matter and making of a girdle: They shall not only have a girdle for a belt, but a rope in stead of a girdle; So that word is rendred (*Isa 3.24.*) by the same Translatour, The wanton and delicate dames of Israel, shall have in stead of a *curious girdle a rope*, to note the extreame turn which God would make in the state of those proud women; and thus he can abase the pride of the greatest men.

Let that be the Observation upon the whole matter,

God sometimes doth, and he alwaies can bring those that are highest in worldly dignity into the extreamest depth of wordly misery.

Rulers become captives, they who sit on thrones live in prisons; the Royal beir is laide aside, and a common girdle, yea girding with sackcloth taken up by the mightiest earthly Gods, when the God of heaven is angry. *The greatest changes are incident to the greatest persons.* *Nebuchadnezzar's dream* was full to this point (*Dan. 2.21.*) He forgetting it, sends for the Magicians and Astrologers to tell him both what his dream was, and what the interpretation of it, but they could not. *There is not a man upon the earth (say they) that can shew the Kings matter, therefore there is no King, Lord, nor Ruler that asked such things at any Magician or Astrologer, none can shew it unto the King, except the Gods whose dwelling is not with flesh.* But unto Daniel the secret was revealed by God, and before he revealed it to the King, he makes this preface almost in *Jobs* stile and language, but fully with his spirit and intent, blessing God because wisdom and might are his, and he changeth the times and seasons, he removeth Kings, and setteth up Kings, he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledg to them that know understanding, &c. (*verse. 20.21.*) Then he tels *Nebuchadnezzar* his dream, and the interpretation thereof. A goodly image it was, yet degenerating and gradually abasing from a Head of Gold, to a breast and armes of silver, thence to belly and thighes of Brasse, to Legs of iron, and Feet of iron, and

and clay. All these represented some Kings and Kingdoms falling, and others rising upon their ruines, till a Kingdom doth arise which should never fall (*vers. 44.*) In the same prophecy (*chap. 4. 10.*) We have the Kingly power described by a goodly tree, the height whereof reached unto heaven, under which the beasts of the field had shadow, and the fowls of the Heaven dwelt in the boughs thereof, &c. But, *Behold a watcher, and an holy one come down from heaven, He cryed aloud and said thus, Hew down the tree, and cut off his branches, and shake off his leaves, and scatter his fruit,* so the body of this flourishing tree vanished to nothing, only the stump of his roots were left in the earth with a band of iron and brasse. This vision is also interpreted (*vers. 24. 25.*) by the loosing the bond of that great King so much, that he was driven from men, and took up his lodging with the beasts of the field, and was made to eat grasse as Oxen, and was wet with the dew of Heaven. God to shew that he can throw the most potent Monarchs, into the lowest condition of men, speaks of this Monarch, as thrown into the condition of beasts: Being (as our late Annotators have observed upon the place) either stricken mad, and so avoided mans company, or being cast out for his tyranny, he wandred among the beasts, and eat herbs and grasse. These visions are clearest manifestations, that God cuts down Kings and Kingdoms, even to the very stumps (as we say) to the very roots, and sometimes pulls up root and all.

And, that God hath actually done thus to the greatest Princes, all histories are full: there is no truth hath received greater testimony then this. The records of Scripture, give us high instances of it (*Judg. 1. 6, 7.*) *Adonibezek a great King, was taken prisoner, by the Army of the two tribes, Judah and Simeon, and They cut off his thumbs, and his great toes:* The eminency of the judgment draws from him an acknowledgment of his own former cruelty, and of the present justice of God upon him, *Three-score and ten Kings having their thumbs and great toes cut off, gathered their meat under my table, as I have done, so God hath requited me.* He cut off their thumbs, that they might be disabled from handling arms, or fighting with him; he cut off their great toes, that they might be disabled to run from him, or escape by flight. Suppose these were petty Princes, yet their number was great; and the hand of God was seen greatly both in casting them from their dignities, and in catching him at last, who had

captivated all them. And as those heathen Kings, so also some of the Kings of *Judah*, who were of Gods special anointing and setting up, were miserably afflicted, and brought into bondage by the special counsel of God. Take the example of *Zedekiah* (2 King. 25. 6, 7.) whom, when the Army of the *Chaldees* took the City, they persued and took, and brought to the King of *Babylon*, who gave judgement upon him; and they slew the sons of *Zedekiah* before his eyes, and put out the eyes of *Zedekiah*, and bound him with fetters of brass, and carried him to *Babylon*. How sad a spectacle was here? A King of *Judah*, the ruler of Gods chosen people, in fetters of brass? When the latter Greek Empire was overthrown by the *Turks*, that great family of the *Paleologi* (in which the Empire had long continued) came to that lowness, that some of the Royal blood became servants and ordinary tradesmen. In them the observation of the Preacher was fulfilled (*Eccles. 10. 7.*) *I have seen servants upon horses, and Princes walking as servants upon the Earth.* *Sapor* King of *Persia*, took *Valentinian* the Emperor prisoner, and used him as a stool for himself to step upon, when he mounted into his saddle. *Sesostris* King of *Egypt* subduing divers Kings, compelled them to draw his Chariot. The *Roman* Historians give frequent testimony, that in the flourishing state of that *Imperious Common-wealth*, conquered Kings and Princes were dragg'd at their Chariots in triumph. Victorious *Tamerlane* having overthrown and taken *Bajazet* the Turkish Emperour, shackled him in fetters of gold, caused him to be shut up in an iron cage, made in the fashion of a grate, and so carryed him like a wilde beast, as he marched thorow *Asia*, to be scorned of his own people. *Henry* the fourth Emperour of *Germany*, having been oft worsted in battel, was at last reduced to such exigents, that he had not wherewith to buy him bread, but was forced to come to the great Church at *Spires* (which he himself had built) and there beg to be a *Chorister*, that so he might get a small stipend to keep him from starving, but could not obtain it: which repulse caused him to bespeak the standers by, in the words of lamenting *Job* (chap. 12. 21.) *Have pity upon me, O my friends, for the hand of God hath touched me.* The weight of these miseries brought him shortly after to his grave, but he found none so humane as to put him in, for he lay unburied five years, no man daring to do it, because the Pope had forbidden it to be done. These examples

amples (more might be added) are clear expositions of, or experiments rather of his Scripture. Let the great men of the earth hear and fear, and do no more presumptuously, let them take the counsel of Christ (*Pſal. 2.*) *Be wiſe therefore now O ye Kings, and be inſtructed ye Judges of the earth; Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling: Kiſſe the Son leſt he be angry, and ye periſh from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little:* There is no ſtriving by the moſt glorious Princes of the earth, with him who is the King of Heaven, and Lord of glory.

Take two corollaries from the whole. *If the Lord do thus toſs Kings like tennis-balls, and hurl whole Kingdoms into ruine; if he befools the Judges, and ſpoys the Counſellours of the earth, ſurely he will not ſpare inferiours and weaklings, who ſtrengthen themſelves againſt him.* If God deal thus with Kings, what will he do with ſubjects? He that ſmites Princes, will he let a people paſs unpuniſht? God hath in all ages ſet ſome Kings and Princes on the ſcaffold, and made them eminent in ſufferings, as well as in dignity, that others beholding the juſtice of God, might glorifie him, and humble themſelves. Hence we may argue, as Chriſt did in his own caſe; *If it be thus done to the green tree, what ſhall be done to the dry?* If the Lord hath been thus ſevere againſt the tall eſt cedars in *Lebanon*, and againſt the oaks of *Baſhan* (Kings and Monarchs of the world) that are exalted and lifted up: Shall not low and dry ſhrubs (inferior perſons) feel the axe and ſtroke of his anger, when they ſin contemptuouſly againſt him? Even theſe are often as proud, unjuſt and oppreſſive, according to the line of their power, and the length of their hand, as they who have longeſt hands, and largeſt power. It is an admirable diſpenſation, when God laies his rod upon the back of Kings, to warn mean men. The Children of Princes are uſually corrected (for their faults) by correcting the Children of plebeians in their preſence; their Tutors and governours do only put them in fear, and make them know diſcipline; by the ſmart which others feel. What ſhall we ſay then, when God corrects the children of Kings, yea Kings themſelves, in the ſight of the common people, that they may be warned and learn diſcipline.

Secondly, *If the ſtrength of Kings cannot hold out againſt the anger of God, how ſhall the weak ſtand before him when he is angry?* That argument in the Prophet (*Jer. 12. 5.* *If thou haſt run with*

foot-men, and they have wearied thee, then how canſt thou contend with horſes) may be inverted here, if God hath contended with horſes and they could not weary him, how eaſily will he run with footmen: The ſtateliſt palaces, and ſtrongest thrones of Kings have been conſumed or thrown down at his word: then what will become of cottages and common mens eſtates, when he ſpeaks againſt them. When the Lord hath once (as lamenting Jeremy complains, *Lam. 2. 16.*) in the indignation of his anger deſpiſed the King and the Prieſt, his indignation will make quick diſpatch of the reſt, who follow their ſteps in ſin, or partake in their tranſgreſſion.

JOB Chap. 12. Verſ. 19, 20, 21.

He leadeth Princes away ſpoiled, and overthroweth the mighty.

He removeth away the ſpeech of the truſty, and taketh away the underſtanding of the aged.

He powreth contempt upon Princes, and weakneth the ſtrength of the mighty.

JOB goes on in his enumeration of inſtances, for the proof and clearing up of his grand propoſition. In the context before opened we ſaw how God *leadeth Counſellours away ſpoiled, and maketh the Judges fools*; how he *loſeth the bond of Kings, and girdeth their loines with a girdle*. Here we find him at the ſame work ſtill, though upon other objects, *he leadeth Princes away ſpoiled, and overthroweth the mighty*. There is a difference about the word which we tranſlate *Princes*: At the 17th verſe, *He leadeth Counſellours away ſpoiled*, and here, *He leadeth Princes away ſpoiled*: Spoiled (as was ſhewed before) of their ends, and of their hopes, of their power and honour, yea and of their wits and underſtandings, which cauſeth ſome to render it, *He leadeth Princes into madneſs*. Mr. Broughton, *He bringeth Dukes to badneſs*: And the Vulgar, *He leadeth Priests into diſhonour, or ſpoiled of their honour*. The Hebrew [*Cohen*] indifferently;

*Facit principes
ut deveniant in
dementiam. Jun
Ducit sacer-
dotes inglorios.
Vulg.
יְהוָה*

*Ministrare in
sacris aut poli-
ticis. Sacerdos
princeps in qua-
cunque dignitate
constitutus.*

ferently signifies a *Prince* or a *Priest*, and is frequently used in the old Testament for both: And the verb whence this noun is derived, signifies to administer, both in political, and ecclesiastical affairs, and so either a governour in the Common-wealth, or a governour in the Church. It is put for a Church-governour, *Isa. 28. 7. The Priest and the Prophet have erred*, *Psal. 99. 6. Moses and Aaron among his Priests*: And for a State-governour, *2 Sam. 8. 18. Davids sons were chief rulers*: For both, *Gen. 41. 45. The Priest, or Prince of On*, *Exod. 2. 16. The Priest, or Prince of Midian*.

Three reasons are assigned, why those two dignities fell under one expression.

First, Because of old time, *the Priest and the Prince* were one person. The eldest in the family (before the giving of the law) was both: And after the giving of the law, together with all the ceremonial institutes, the high Priest of *Aarons* order was a great Prince in *Israel*.

Secondly. The Priesthood in general was an office of honour, therefore it is exprest by a word of honour.

Thirdly, Because the Priests were unto God, the King of heaven, as Princes are unto the Kings of the earth: Princes stand but a degree below Kings, and bear the great offices in Kingdoms, they are of Kings secret counsel, and know their hearts, they convey the minde of Kings to the people, and often as Commissioners represent their persons. Such (in their capacity) were Priests, in reference unto God; and are therefore called *Gods nigh ones*. This is it which the Lord spake (saith *Moses*, when the two sons of *Aaron* were slain by fire, while they offered with strange fire, (*Levit. 10. 3.*) *I will be sanctified in those that come nigh me, or in my nigh ones*; such especially were the Priests; they approached to God, and received his mind, and were therefore said to speak from Gods mouth, and to preserve knowledge, even the knowledge of himself in their lips. God committed his secrets, and the mysteries of his will to the Priests first, and by their Ministry conveyed both unto the people: They were as the vessel or cabinet, in which God laid up those precious treasures; *The Priests lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth, for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts* (*Mal. 2. 7.*) God gave the honour of this title to the whole Nation of the Jews, they were called a *Nation of Priests*,

*Ex omnibus
regni vos eri-
tis mihi regnum
nobilissimum
familiarissimum
amicissimum
quibus arcana
& secretiora
consilia reve-
labo.*

(Exod. 19. 6.) *Ye shall be to me a Kingdome of Priests, or a royal Priesthood :* A Kingdom of Priests, for two reasons chiefly : First, Because God did esteem that people above all the people of the earth, he put an honour and a value upon them, therefore saith he, *Ye shall be to me a Kingdome of Priests.* And secondly, Because God communicated more of his counsels to that people, then to any other people, and they were more familiar with him then the rest of the world, even as the Priests were more familiar with God, and came nearer to him then the people. So that look what proportion the Priests among the Jews bore to the people, the same did the Jews bear to all other people of the world. We may take the word here in either sense, *He leadeth Princes,* or, *He leadeth Priests away spoyled.*

As the word is reduced *Priest*, Observe,

First, *That the holiness of the profession cannot keep the person from sin.*

Priests provoke God, and therefore they are spoyled. Grace it self is not, much less is any outward vocation, a bar against temptation : And they who fall in temptation are near falling into affliction, whosoever they are. Which makes a second Observation,

They that are near unto God shall suffer when they sin, and the nearer they are, they shall suffer the more, because the nearer they are, the greater is their sin.

The Priests are among the spoyled, Jer. 14. 18. *Both the Prophet and the Priest go about into a land that they know not, that is, they go into banishment, and are carried captives into a strange land.* That text hath a very different reading, for whereas the word which we translate *go about*, signifies also to *trade or make merchandize*, the whole is rendered to this sence : *The Prophets and Priests together make merchandize of you, and you either discern it not, or do not regard it.* This reading gives us a clear reason of that which is contained in the former. This shews their sin, and that their punishment. *Those Prophets and Priests who sell souls in their own land, are justly sold as slaves into a land that is not theirs.* (Lam. 2. 6.) *The Lord hath despised in the indignation of his anger, both the King and the Priest ; he puts King and Priest together, in suffering, because they were joyned in sinning. They who associate in doing evil, shall be associated in feeling it. And they shall feel most evil, when they do it, whose office is* set

set up by God, and they put into office for the preventing of it: such are Kings and Priests. The Prophet *Malachy* reproves the *Levites* (*Mal. 2. 8.*) *Ye are departed out of the way; ye have caused many to stumble at the law; ye have corrupted the covenant of Levi, that is, ye have been false, base, and unfaithful in your office: your selves have gone out of the way of truth and holiness, and ye have hindred those who would have walked in it. It was your duty to preserve the covenant made with your Tribe, but ye have corrupted it. This is your sin, and I will tell you your judgement: Therefore have I also made you contemptible and base before all the people.* We have seen such corrupting themselves and others, and we have seen them made contemptible enough before all. *Unsavory salt is fit only for the dunghill, the seat of contempt.*

As the word is rendered (*Prince*) in our Translation, Observe,

That the honour of man is no shelter against the wrath of God.

As the holiness of the Priests office, cannot do it, so neither can the power of the Princes office. Princes are called the shields of the earth (*Hos. 4. 18*) *Her shields, (or, her rulers, as we render) with shame do love, Give ye.* They are (indeed) the shields of the earth, but they cannot shield themselves against the assaults of Heaven. Princes should be shields to protect men from the oppression of man, but they cannot protect themselves against the justice of God. The Prophet (*Isa. 43. 14.*) tells the people when they were in fear, *Thus saith the Lord your Redeemer, the holy one of Israel, for your sake I have sent to Babylon, and have brought down all their Nobles;* the Hebrew is, *I have brought down all their bars:* Faithful Nobles are the bars of a Kingdom and Common-wealth, to keep out evils: It is their duty to bolt out impiety against God, and unrighteousness towards man: And as they should be a *barre of equity* against these evils of sin, so a *barre of security* to keep out the evils of trouble. Now (saith the Lord) I have sent to *Babylon*, and have brought down all those Nobles, who were as bars in the way, to hinder your deliverance from, and return out of captivity. Those Nobles (it seems) were *cross barr*, they lay cross the way of the people of God, to hinder their passage out of *Babylon*, therefore God destroyed them. *When Nobles or great Princes bar up the liberty of Gods covenant people, their nobility*
and

and greatness will be no bar against their own misery. He leadeth Princes away spoiled, and

פֶּלֶא

Supplantare in-
flectere mutare
deicere, detur-
bare.

He overthroweth the mighty.

Here is another act of Divine power. That, God is omnipotent proves he can do all things, but the doing of them is a visible proof of his omnipotency.

To overthrow, Imports utter ruine : he doth not only shake and displace, but he shakes them to peeces, roots them up, and laies them flat.

He overthroweth the mighty.

Princes are among the mighty ones of the earth, yet some Princes have no great might; but how mighty soever Princes are, down they must, whether they will or no, when the Almighty wills it.

אֵתָא

Robustus fortis
a rad אֵתָא
quæ vox affert
fortitudinem
quandam, quæ
non permittit se
trahari, &
duriciem quæ
pertinaciter
resistit.

Fluvios Ethan.

The Hebrew word signifieth the most confirmed strength, even that strength which seems to laugh at opposition, and to have outgrown all fear of being weakned, or overpowred. Great and impetuous rivers are set out by that word (*Psal. 74. 15.*) *Thou driedst up mighty rivers*, or, *rivers of might*, rivers which nothing can stand against; what can withstand a swelling torrent? The weight and violence of water beareth down all before it: no bonds, no bounds of mans making can stay it. Yet the Lord can, he, and he only beareth down the waters, or he drieth them up: he either *drieth up mighty rivers*, or stoppeth their course, while they are running with full streams, in a full career.

Hence learn,

First, *That all strength and might is weak, before the strong and mighty God.*

He overthroweth the mighty (*1 Sam. 2. 9.*) *by strength shall no man prevail*; when we conclude the probabilities, whether a party shall prevail or no, we count upon their strength: we reckon their numbers, we enquire what Armies they have in the field, what Garrisons in Cities, what friends and confederacies abroad, yet in all this we reckon not upon that which will do the thing, strength cannot do it, *by strength no man shall prevail*, *The Lord overthroweth the mighty*: whatsoever strength we have to assilt us, or to oppose us, the Lord is stronger.

There

There is a fivefold strength, the overthrowing of which mightily declares the strength and might of God.

First, *The strength of the body*; God overthroweth the most robustious and giant-like men, *the sons of Anak are but grasshoppers to him*, they (who as we speak) have bodies of brass, he crusheth before the moth. *Goliath* had a mighty strength of body, and yet the Lord overthrew him: *Sampson* had a mighty strength of body, yet when the Lord withdrew from him, he was overthrown. Then remember the Prophets counsel (*Jer. 9.23.*) *Let not the strong man glory in his strength, but let him that glorieth glory in the Lord, who overthroweth the mighty.*

Secondly, *God overthroweth the strength of riches*; Riches are a strong tower. The same word in the Hebrew signifies strength and riches, because a mans strength is computed by his riches; A rich man is a mighty man in the eye of the world, and so is a worldly rich man in his own eyes. Yet, as the strength of body within us, so the strength of estate without us, is soon blasted by the breath of Gods displeasure. Then, take the counsel of the Apostle *James* (chap. 1.) *Let the brother of high degree rejoice in that he is made low* (that is, low in his own thoughts, rich men are usually fuller of high thoughts than they are of earthly treasures) the rich man hath cause to rejoice when he is low in himself, *knowing that as the flower of the grass he shall pass away.* Riches and rich men pass away of themselves, how much more when God blows upon them and drives them away.

Thirdly, *He overthroweth the mightiness of honour*: Many fortifie themselves with great earthly Titles, but these are but paper wals to the batteries of heaven. *Hamans* honour among the people, and favour with the Prince could not save him, when God frowned.

Fourthly, *He overthroweth the mightiness of authority*, that's distinct from honour, a man may have great titles, and yet but little authority. Mean men have sometimes great commands, they may have authority over those who are above them in honour. But though the might of authority be in conjunction with the mightiness of honour, the Lord overthroweth it. So that he who could (as the Centurion in the Gospel) say to this man, *Go and he goeth, to another come, and he cometh, to a third, do this and he doth it*, may at last (as our Proverb speaketh) *command his man, and do it himself.* When once commands are slighted,

authority is overthrown. God who gives weight to the word of a man, can also make it light, he shall speak and none regard.

Fifthly, *God overthroweth the mightiness of courage*: He makes the valiant faint, and the man whose heart was like the heart of a lion, to run like a coward at the shaking of a leaf: God who saith to them that are of a *fearful heart, be strong, fear not* (Isa. 35. 4.) *and makeih the feeble to be as David* (Zach. 12. 8.) his God can say to the strong, be ye afraid, and to him that was as *David*, be thou feeble: He that overthroweth the courageous, can also overthrow courage.

Thus the strength of body, the strength of riches, the strength of honour, the strength of authority, and the strength of courage are all overthrown by the strength of God. Who can conceive how much strength God hath, who is stronger than all these strengths? And as the Lord alwayes overthroweth the mighty, and gets the day of them, when he engageth with them, so he desires to engage with them. Mighty men seem to be some match for God, and the fall of these makes God more known as he is *Almighty*. Hence that of the Prophet (Isa. 2. 12.) *The day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon, Whom?* he doth not say upon the low, weak & poor, but it shall be upon, *every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up*: What day of the Lord is this? It is the day of the Lords judgment, the day of his wrath, when he contendeth with a people, then he picks out the great ones, chiefly, to contend with. His day *shall be upon all the cedars of Lebanon, and upon all the oaks of Bashan, and upon every fenced wall*, that is, upon men who are in the account of the world tall like cedars, strong like oaks, high like towers, invincible like walls of brass, with these the Lord will be dealing in his day, and (vers. 17.) *The Lord alone shall be exalted in that day*, as if he had said, these men were exalted before, now the Lord overthrowing them, he himself shall be exalted. For the text may be taken two ways, he shall be exalted either as the Agent, that is, it shall appear that he alone hath overthrown these mighty ones: Or secondly, the Lord alone shall be exalted, that is, he will come into the place of those mighty men; these carried it in the eye of the world, as the only great ones, now the Lord comes into their place, they shall be exalted no more, his Name shall be exalted, and his only. When God appears

pears in his greatness, none appear great but he: When he exalts himself, none will pretend to exaltation. The Lord alone shall be exalted in that day.

I shall give you four corollaries or deductions from this proposition, *The Lord overthroweth the mighty.*

First, *Then, fear not the mightiest enemies.* God is Almighty, the weakness of God is stronger than men; seeing God is described overthrowing the mighty, if we keep close to him, we need not fear to be overthrown by the mighty.

Secondly, If the Lord overthroweth the mighty, *Then trust not in the mightiest friends.* When great seconds, and assistants appear on our part, then we think we are safe; but what can mighty men do for us, if the Almighty God be against us? as was further shewed (*Chap. 9. 13.*) *Unless the Lord withdraw his anger, the proud helpers do stoop under him; the helpers of strength stoop, unless upheld by the strong God.* As therefore we ought not to fear the worst of foes, so not to trust upon the best of friends, because they are mighty.

Thirdly, *Let no man rejoice or boast in his own strength,* though that five-fold strength before spoken of, meet in him, yet let him not trust upon it. He that breaks them single can break them combined. A three-fold, yea a five-fold cord, is easily broken by the arm of omnipotency.

Fourthly, (which was toucht, *vers. 18.*) *If God overthrow the the mighty, how soon can he overthrow those who have no might?* You that are weak and poor in comparison of the mighty Princes and *Nimrods* of the world, you (I say) have cause to fear and tremble before the mighty God: As they said, *2 King. 10. 4.* *Behold two Kings stood not before him, how then shall we?* so we may say much more of the Lord, two Kings, yea hundreds of Kings, Nobles, and men of might have not stood before him, how shall worms, and weaklings wrastle it out, and contend with him?

Verse 20. *He removeth away the speech of the trusty, and taketh away the understanding of the aged.*

This Verse gives us another act of Gods power, towards the altering and subverting of States and Common-wealths. Kingdoms are much upheld by the eloquence of Orators, and by the wisdom of the ancient. God makes these *two removes* when he would remove the beauty and blessing of a Kingdom. First,

He removeth away the speech of the trusty.

*Labium ponitur
pro loquela.*

The Hebrew is, *He removeth the lips of the trusty.* The same word signifies lips and speech, because the lips are the instrument of speech (*Gen. 11. 1.*) *All the earth was of one speech, or of one lip, that is, they all spake one language. He removeth the speech of*

The trusty.

*Amovet sermo-
nem eloquenti-
bus. Jun.
לְנִאמְנִי
a rad: לְנִאמְנִי
Dixit locutus
elocutus fuit.
Rab. Kinchi.*

The word hath a double reading, according to a double derivation in the Hebrew. For some derive it from a root which signifies to *speake*. Taking it so, the sense is, *He bereaveth Orators of their eloquence*, or (as Mr. Broughton, closer to the letter) *He bereaveth the Orator of lips, He makes them like men dumb or tongue-tied, who were once all voice and tongue.*

Thus *Job* toucheth upon all those evils which hasten the ruine of a people; one whereof, and that a great one, is this, when God takes away speech from men, whose very trade it is to speak. When God threatned to break the *staff* of *Israel*, he saith, *I will take away the eloquent Orator* (*Isa. 3. 3.*) *Kingdoms with all their blessings are as much, if not more upheld or cast down by tongues, than they are by hands.*

God is said to remove or take away the speech of the Orator two ways.

First, When he takes the Orators away, his picking such out of counsels by death, hath a sad preface in it, of the approaching funerals of publick prosperity.

Secondly, When though he leaves the speakers, yet he disables them to speak: When though he leaves the Orator, yet he takes away his oratory, so that he cannot deliver himself with any command over the attentions and affections of his hearers: that's the excellency of oratory to carry the heart by the ear, to make every sentence perswasive, every word a nail or a goad, a nail to fasten resolution, or a goad to quicken unto action. It was said of a *Grecian Orator*, who was also a great souldier, that he thundered and lightned, moved and awakned all when he spake. But if God once take away the *speech of the Orator*, he may speak his hearers into a sleep.

Hence Observe,

First, *That ability of speech is a special gift of God.*

He

*Pericles (O-
lympius pro-
pter eloquenti-
am dictus) ful-
minabat into-
nabat, confun-
debat Graciam.
Plutarch. in
vita Peric.*

He removeth and taketh it way, therefore he giveth it. (*Exod. 4. 10.*) We find *Moses eloquent only to tell God he was not eloquent*: he ſpeaks very rhetorically to excuſe his ſervice for want of rhetorick. Lord (ſaith he) *I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor ſince thou haſt ſpoken unto thy ſervant (neither yeſterday nor to day, that is, not at any time) but I am ſlow of ſpeech, and of a ſlow tongue.* But how doth the Lord answer him? *The Lord ſaid unto him, who hath made mans mouth? As if he had ſaid, Seeing I make the mouth which is the inſtrument of ſpeech, or the ſhop wherein words are made, I alſo can make the mouth eloquent, & give thee words to ſpeak.* The Lord argues further with *Moses, who maketh the dumb? Is it not I the Lord? I who make the dumb, can make thee ſpeak, and ſpeak eloquently too: I can give thee a flowing tongue.* Therefore be not afraid to go on my errand: I who ſend thee, will ſtore thee with language to do the errand about which I ſend thee: *It ſhall be given thee in that ſame hour, what to ſpeak.*

Secondly Obſerve,

Man is not maſter of his own tongue.

God takes away the lip of the Orator. They (*Pſal. 12. 3, 4.*) bragged much of their tongues; ſurely they thought if any thing was their own, their tongues were, they could ſpeak what they liſt, *who is Lord over us?* ſay they, Yet they found a Lord over their tongues. God is Lord of the tongue two ways,

First, Becauſe he will bring every one to an account for his tongue: *Thoſe boasters (Pſal. 12.) thought themſelves exempted from any ſuch controule. Our tongues are our own, who is Lord over us? who hath any thing to do with what we ſpeak? who ſhall audit us for words and ſillables? Yes, there is one will do it to a ſillable. God gives the rule what we ſhall ſpeak, and he will call every one to a reckoning for what he hath ſpoken.*

Secondly, God is Lord of the tongue in reference to the power of ſpeech. Man cannot ſpeak what he would, or when he would (*Numb. 23. 11, 12.*) *Balak* had hired *Balaam* to curſe the people of God, and *Balaam* had a good will to it, if ever man had, but *Balak* found *Balaam* in another note, he only publiſhed the glory of *Iſrael*, and prophesied their higheſt bleſſings. *Balak* was extreemly troubled at this; and ſaith, *What haſt thou done unto me? I took thee to curſe mine enemies, and behold thou haſt bleſſed them altogether.* As if he had ſaid, *What*

Balaam? Art not thou master of thy own words? I called thee to curse, and not to bless, didst not thou understand what my business was? I knew Israel was fenced enough and too much with blessings: How is it that when I sent for thee to blast them, that thou hast blessed them altogether, art thou bribed on their side? or knowest thou not that I am able to promote thee to honour? speak, man, the sudden fate of this numerous people, and fear not? why hast thou gone so contrary to my design? What saith Balaam? He answered and said, Must I not take heed to speak that which the Lord hath put in my mouth? Balaam seems to reply from his conscience.

'Tis the duty of every man to take heed to speak that which the Lord puts in his mouth. But Balaam was only overpowred; if God would have suffered him to speak what Balaam had desired, his own conscience had never stood in his way: He that opened his Asses mouth a little before to reprove his madness, now shut his mouth from uttering that wickedness. *The Lord (saith he) hath blessed them, and I cannot reverse it: as if he had said, I have been tugging at it, and labouring to curse them, but I cannot do it.* The Lord restrained his heart, and bound his tongue, that he could not form a curse, and now he puts it off with this fine language, *Must I not take heed to speak that which the Lord hath put in my mouth?* No man ever came with fuller purpose to curse the Israel of God than Balaam did, but his tongue was not his own, he could not.

So much upon that rendring of the text, *He bereaves Orators of their eloquence.*

אֱמָנָה
a rad: אֱמָנָה
que est constantia fidelitatis.
stabilitas in dictis & promissis.
Qui digni sunt quibus fides habeatur. Auth. Catena.

¶ We translate, *He removeth away the speech of the trusty:* And so the word is derived from a root, which signifies constancy, fidelity, truth, stability in word or deed: Men so qualified, are worthy to be trusted, and only they. But though it is easie to say, who a *trusty man* is, yet it may be doubted still who is here meant by these *trusty men*: Yet considering *Jobs* scope, we may well conclude that he speaks of men either actually trusted, or worthy to be trusted with the management of publick affairs. Some *Magistrates* are not on y *Governors* over the people, but *Feoffees* for them. Thus the Free-holders of *England* in their respective places, chuse the *Members of the House of Commons in Parliament*, as their *Trustees*, and commit the protection of their estates and liberties into their hand: Of such *Trusty men*, or of *men thus Trusted*, we may well interpret this text. And as of

of these Counsellours whom the people chuse, and Trust: So also of those whom Kings and Princes chuse for, and Trust with great offices and employments.

But how doth God remove away the speech of such men: What? doth he make them speechless, or strike them dumb? he can do that; but here (I conceive) the removing of speech may be taken two ways, first, only, for an abating of the ability of speech; so that they who would, cannot give counsel, either with that clearnesse of judgement, or freedom of language, which they have sometimes shewed. Secondly. For the changing or turning of the tenour of their speech. When a man speaks unlike himself, contrary to what he hath spoken, when he speaks as if he were not the *same man, then his speech is removed.* VVhen a man, who once spake for the truth of God, speaks against it: VVhen he that once spake for the rights, and just liberties of men, is now heard speaking against them: VVhen they who in every speech were wont to advance those counsels which tended to the peace and safety of Kingdoms, shall upon all emergencies speak that which doth but lengthen out their trouble and danger, Then know *the speech of the trusty is removed.* *The speech is never removed till the heart be. The minde is first changed, and then the words.* As the manner of speaking shews of what countrey we are, *Thou art a Galilean, and thy speech bewrayeth thee: to the matter which is spoken, discovers of what part we are.* We may say to many, you are thus or thus, for your speech bewrayeth you: and to some, You are removed from the cause you once appeared in, *for your speech is removed:* you have certainly turn'd tables, and change your interest, for your language is changed, and your discourse runs counter to all you did before.

This is the removing of speech.

But how can we attribute this to God? I answer, God changes or removes the speech of the trusty, not by making them unconstant and unfaithful, but by leaving them to their own unfaithfulness and unconstancy: Every man (even the best of men) have a seed of unfaithfulness, or a principle of apostacy in them, and if God leave them to themselves, they are quickly turned aside. *No man knows what his heart will do, till he is tryed.*

The time of temptation is the time of discovery. Changes
in

in the providence of God, make the changeableneſs of mens mindes, both viſible in their actions, and audible in their ſpeeches. For

This change or remove of ſpeech, ariſeth two waies.

Sometimes from fear, Some are ſurpriſed and arreſted with dreadful fore-caſts, what will become of them, and their eſtates, what of their wives and children, if they ſtand to former profeſſions and engagements. *Fear is a very bad Counſellour.* Fear hath removed the ſpeech of the *truſty* more than once.

Secondly, The ſpeech of the *truſty* is removed through hopes and gifts. Expectation will change a mans opinion, much more will ſomewhat in profeſſion. How many have loſt or alter'd their tongues by being felt in the hand (*Deut. 16. 19.*) *A gift doth blind the eyes of the wiſe, and pervert the words of the righteous,* That expreſſion in *Moses* of *perverting words*, doth excellently answer and expound this in *Job* of *removing ſpeech*. And whereas *Job* ſaith only that *the ſpeech of the truſty is removed*, *Moses* ſaith, *the words of the righteous are perverted*. He that was right and went right before, even his words are perverted by a gift. The ancient adage ſaid of ſuch, *The ox is upon their tongue*, that is, money or worldly reſpects hath ſilenced them: The reaſon of that ſpeaking was becauſe the figure of an ox was auciently ſtampt upon their money; we ſay the *black ox* treads upon ſome mens toes, we may ſay, the white, or the red ox treads ſo hard upon many mens tongues, that either they will not ſpeak at all, or not as they did. We read that *Demosthenes*, a great Orator, being to ſpeak upon a buſineſs of conſequence, came to the bar with a ſcarf or muſler about his neck, and ſaid he was not able to ſpeak, he was troubled with a *Quincey*; to which ſome of the wits of the time, answered, That *the Orator was ſick of the money, not of the quincey*. Bribes had ſwel'd his throat, that he could not plead. Thus the ſpeech of the *truſty* is removed, when ſome unrighteous bias will not ſuffer them to ſpeak what they ſhould, or carries them to ſpeak what they ſhould not.

Yet further, Some underſtand *the truſty*, of (men truſted with the ſouls of men) the Priests and Prophets of thoſe times. The word may be well tranſlated, *truth-speakers*, or *meſſengers of truth*, God removeth their ſpeech.

First,

Βῆς ἐπὶ
γλώτῃ.

Non Angina
ſed Argentan-
gna correptum
Oratorem di-
cenes Plutar.

First, When they whom he had ſent with promiſes of mercy in their mouths, are now commanded to thunder out threatnings and educations of his wrath, when they to whom God hath ſaid, *Comfort ye, comfort ye my people*, have now no meſſages, but ſad ones, no viſions, but of amazement and deſolation.

Commutat promiſſiones ſuas factas per prophetas, in comminationes, vel efficit ut qui laeta polliceri ſolent nihil jam niſi triſte prædicent. Philip:

Secondly, The Lord removeth away the ſpeech of theſe *truſty ones*, by leaving a people to the ſpeech of thoſe who are *untruſty*. When the Jews would not receive the faithful Prophets, God gave them up to the teachings of falſe Prophets. Speech is removed, when the ſpeakers are thus changed.

Thirdly, God changeth or removeth the ſpeech of *Truthſpeakers*, by forbidding them to ſpeak. God doth ſometimes ſilence the ſincereſt Prophets. When men will not obey what they ſpeak, God will not let them ſpeak (*Ezek 3 26.*) *I will make thy tongue cleave to the roof of thy mouth, that thou ſhalt be dumb, and ſhalt not be to them a reprover, for they are a rebellious houſe.* As men when their ſins is at the higheſt, ſay to the Prophets, *Prophesie no more*; ſo when judgment is at the higheſt, God ſaith unto the Prophets, *Prophesie not*; The wrath of God is extremely hot, when flattering prophets are ſent to cry, *Peace, peace, where there is no peace*, and to daub up ſinful men with untempered mortar: 'Tis alſo as hot, if not hotter, when God puts a bar upon the lips of his faithful Prophets, that they ſhall no longer denounce his war againſt ſin, or convince the ſinner. The peace of a people cannot be long liv'd, when once the ſpeech of the truſty is thus or thus removed.

Take two brief deductions from all.

First, *There is no depending upon the faithfulness of man.* God removeth away the ſpeech of the truſty. Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lye (*Pſal. 62. 9.*) they that have done and ſpoken right to day, may ſpeak and do wrong to morrow. *Man is a mutable creature in his qualification, as well as in his conſtitution.* Both his natural, and his moral endowments are as mortal as his life is. And in many theſe die and go to the grave before their Maſters.

Secondly, If the ſpeech of the truſty be ſo often removed, Then, we muſt judge of what is ſpoken by a ſtanding rule, not by the perſon ſpeaking. It is an evil, and a ſore diſeaſe under the ſun, that good counſels are reſuſed, becauſe ſome have a prejudice againſt the perſon: And it is a worſe evil, when all, even evil

counsels are received upon the good esteem we have of the person. We must look to the matter, not to the man, both in the things of God, and in the things of men; there is neither wisdom nor safety in taking any thing upon trust, especially when we hear that God in judgment *removes away the speech of the trusty*. Whosoever speaks, if he speaks truth, it ought to be embraced. And though an *Achitophel*, an Oracle of wisdom on earth, or Angel from heaven speak what is false, 'tis our duty to reject it. The wisest men are not alwayes wise, neither do the prudent always understand their way. The holiest men are not holy in all things, neither do they who are real friends to truth, speak all truth. *Paul* (Gal. 2.) found *Peter* faltering in his speech, and giving not only counsel, but example that was not right. *The ancient Fathers, men of profound judgment and understanding in the Scriptures, have erred, and misdelivered the mind of God.* Whole Councils (which are a collection of wise and learned men) have had their mistakes. We may conclude as the Prophet doth (*Isa. 2:22.*) *Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils, for wherein is he to be accounted of?* The honest and the wise, the holy and the just, the eloquent and the trusty, are not always to be trusted, For, *God removeth away the speech of the trusty, who (possibly) may be all these.*

And taketh away the understanding of the aged.

*Sapientes senes
vocantur licet
sint juvenes,
propterea quod
sapientia ut-
plurimum in se-
nibus invenitur.
Rab. Dav.*

*Significat gu-
stare, inde cog-
noscere judica-
re, metaphora
ducta a sensu
ad animum.*

Understanding is so proper to the aged, or men of years, that an understanding young man, deservedly draws upon himself the honour and account of many years; as *an old man very foolish is young-old, so a young man very wise is old-young.*

Age ordinarily heightens understanding, and experience maturates and improves natural parts, as was shewed at the twelfth verse: yet they whose understandings have had the greatest advantages of experience, may act without understanding, yea against, not only experience, but reason. *Some mens understandings are enfeebled with age, and themselves are old children rather than old men,* that's the judgement which this text holds out unto us.

The word which we render *understanding*, signifies to *taste*, or the *sense of tasting*, and it is frequently translated from the sense to the understanding, because (as was shewed at the 11th. verse) the understanding tastes a doctrine, or a proposition, whether it be

be true or false, as the mouth or pallet tastes meat, whether it be sweet or bitter. This word is very comprehensive, signifying (as some critical Rabbins teach us) counsel, judgment, wisdom, reason, both the argument and decree, upon which any thing is done, as also the discretion with which it is done. Grammarians tell us that the due and proper accent of every word, is in the Hebrew called [*Tagnam*] because the accent doth give as it were a right taste of the sense, and so leads to a right understanding of the word. When the holy finger invites all to that glorious banquet (*Psal. 24. 8.*) *O taste and see that the Lord is good*, he means, understand how good he is. The same inspired heart praise in this language (*Psal. 110. 56.*) *Teach me good judgment and knowledg*, that is, give me a true taste and relish of heavenly truth, (*Prov. 11. 22.*) *As a jewel in a swines snout, so is a fair woman without discretion or understanding. Beauty without brains is a loathsome deformity.* In the book of Ezra, the Chief or President of a Council, who ordereth and moderates the whole proceeding there, is thus expressed, *The Master of Taste.* He had need to have a quick internal palate, who must taste all men, and all matters, as the President of a Council must.

This taste, this understanding, or whatsoever moral excellency comes within the compass of this word, God taketh away sometimes from the aged, or from men (who for that service) are of the most perfect age.

Hence Observe,

First, *Our understandings are at the dispose of God.*

He gives understanding to the simple, and he can take it from the subtile. *Old men are not always wise:* Not only because some never had wisdom, but because many loose the wisdom which once they had. And this is a loss which we sustain from no hand but the hand of God. Man may take out riches and worldly estates from us, and make us poor, but God only can take our understandings from us, and make us fools. Men can empty our purses, but God, and God only can empty our brains.

Observe Secondly,

That when the Lord will destroy a people, he takes away the understanding of the ancient.

Heathens said, *God bereaves them of understanding, whom he designs for destruction.* Now as this is a sad presage of ruine to the party himself, so likewise of ruine to those who have relati-

Hinc Sept. intelligentiam, Rab. Moyf. probationem. Rab. Mord. Decretum.

Pagn. Consilium, Tyg. Judicium, Regia Discretionem, Hebraeus apud Cajet. saporem reddit.

Hac vox in Grammatica fig. accentum-cujuslibet dicti onis, eo quod det cibonam, gustum & sensum ad intelligendam sapientiam. Rab. Mard.

כעל טעם Praeses consilij.

Quos perdere vult Iupiter hos dementat.

tion to him. And as it is a judgement upon a people when Princes refuse the aged, and follow young Counsellours: So it is the same, if not a greater judgement upon a people, when God takes wisdom from old Counsellours, and leaves them to act like young ones. A young man without understanding cannot do so much hurt as he that is aged. His youth leaves his advices under question and discussion. But when old and experienced Counsellours, who have travelled in affairs many years, and have got the reputation of wise men, prove like empty casks without any filling of wisdom, they quickly undoe all with authority, and unsuspected. No marvel then if God put this among his marvellous judgements (*Isa. 29, 14.*) *Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work amongst this people, even a marvellous work and a wonder.* See how attention is raised, here is, *Behold*, and then, *Behold I will do a marvellous work*, and then, *a marvellous work and a wonder.* And what is it? *The wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid.* No man wonders to see some men without wisdom, they were never guilty of it: But to see wise men unwise, and prudent men (such I mean as have given long proof of their prudence) without understanding, here's a wonder. As we say, young men may dye, but old men must; so young men may be wise, but old men should: and those old men, who have once been thought wise, are seldom thought otherwise of, though God have indeed taken away their wisdom. *Now there are no fools do so much mischief, as they who are thought to be wise.* A fool that is wise in his own conceit only, endangers no body but himself, for no body will trust him. But a fool that is wise in the conceit of others, may endanger thousands, for all are ready, not only to trust, but adore his *foolship*. It would not be so great a judgment to have understanding taken from the aged, if the reputation of it were not still left upon them. It is a soar scourge to a land, when God as the Prophet threatens (*Is. 3. 2.*) takes away that staff, *the prudent and the ancient*, that is, young men who are wise, as well as ancient wise men. But it is a soarer scourge, when he takes away *the prudence of the ancient*: So that those ancient men, who used to be prudent, become light and precipitate in their counsels. When stayed and sober-paced men, run headlong, all, both things and persons are like to run headlong with them. By such means foolish counsels, the wise and just

just God brings the honourable into contempt, & the strong to weakness, and when all this is done, there is nothing wanting for the ruine of a people, but their actual ruining. The next verse shews us God doing both these.

Verse 21. *He poureth contempt upon Princes, and weakneth the strength of the mighty.*

This verse (I say) is a continuation of the former argument : giving us yet more prognosticks of the approaching ruine of Kingdoms and Common-wealths. He had said (verse 19th) *He leadeth Princes away spoyled, now, He poureth contempt upon Princes.* As understanding is most proper for the aged, so is honour for Princes, and strength for the mighty. God, to make his judgements exact, punisheth them in that which is most peculiar to them. *He poureth contempt upon Princes, &c.*

He poureth contempt.

That is, he makes them very contemptible. To pour out any liquid, implieth plenty of it ; as the pouring out of the spirit, a plentiful giving of the spirit. When the spirit was poured out (Act. 2.) The by-standers said, *these men are full of new wine :* No saith the Apostle, *these men are not drunken (as ye suppose) but this is that which was spoken by the Prophet Joel, And it shall come to pass in the last daies (saith God) that I will pour out of my spirit upon all flesh, that is, they shall have abundance of my Spirit.* So, Isa. 44. 3. *I will pour out water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground, that is, they shall have much spiritual refreshing, who now are quite destitute of it : such are there shadowed out by the thirsty and dry ground.* Again, (Zech. 12. 10.) *I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication,* And as pouring, applied to the spirit, implies a great measure of the spirit, so in any other matter. Psal. 42. 4. *When I remember these things, I pour out my soul in me :* The pouring out of the soul, is the pouring out of sorrows; and to pour out sorrow, is to be exceeding sorrowful : So the pouring out of fury, notes an excessive fury, Ezek. 20. 33. And when David as a Type of Christ complaineth (Psal. 22. 14.) *I am poured out like water,*

*Solet effusio
magnum profusi
liquoris copiam
denotare.
Pined*

his meaning is, all my bodily ſtrength and comforts are departed. Whatſoever is poured out, poured in, or poured upon us, be it good or evil, we have enough of it. Much contempt is their portion, upon whom contempt is poured. Here it is poured upon them, upon whom a little is very much.

Upon Princes.

נרז Liberales,
munificos deno-
tat, quod libe-
ralitas & be-
neſicentia prin-
cipes maxime
deceat.

Nadib eſt homo
liberi ſpiritus,
non invide &
coacte ſed ſua
ſe voluntate
impellens ad ho-
neſta & laudi-
bilis, Merc.

Princes are veſſels of civil honour, yea many Princes are foun-
tains of civil honour, they pour honour upon others; how great
a turn is it, when contempt is poured on them, and they filled
with diſhonour! Some are ſo contemptible, that they are not
ſenſible of contempt: but nothing touches Princes ſo ſoon as
contempt doth. 'Tis worſe to them to be deſpiſed, then to be
deſtroyed, and they can eaſier part with their lives then with
their honour. Here then is the very pinch of Princes, *contempt*,
eſpecially if they be Princes of Noble and Princely ſpirits: Such
are pointed at in this word, which properly ſignifies *munificent*,
liberal and *free-hearted*, Princes are, or ſhould be ſo. Liberality
or munificence is the vertue and honour of Princes. Such a free
Princely ſpirit God expects from the meanest of his people to-
ward his ſervice (*Exod. 35.5.*) *Take ye from amongſt you an of-
fering unto the Lord, whoſoever is of a willing heart, let him bring
it.* A true worſhipper is not thruſt and driven on by an out-
ward written law, but finds a law written in his own heart: He
(as it is ſaid of *Araunah*) *like a King gives to the King.* *David*
prayeth, *Uphold me with thy free ſpirit* (*Pſal. 51. 14.*) 'Tis this
word, the ſpirit of the Lord is a Noble, free, Princely ſpirit. It
is free two wayes, 1. Subjectively, or in it ſelf, giving out freely
and liberally to us. 2 It is free in the effects, *Where the ſpirit of
the Lord is, there is liberty*, it makes us free. They who have re-
ceived this ſpirit, ſerve the Lord freely, and judge his ſervice
freedom. Hence (*Pſal. 110.3.*) *all the people of God are expreſſed
by this word, a Princely people; Thy people ſhall be willing in the
day of thy power, they ſhall be willing as Princes, liberal as Kings,
they ſhall give up ſoul, body, name, eſtate, all to Jeſus Chriſt;*
they who have felt the day of divine power, are not acted by hu-
mane power, by the coercions and ordinances of men; they are
under no constraint, but that of the love of Chriſt. Worldly
Princes have that in their name, which the Saints have in their
nature. And becauſe many worldly Princes have ſo little of
that

that in their natures, which they have fully in their name, true Nobleness, I mean, and freeness of spirit to do good, and defend those who are good; therefore God poureth contempt upon them.

Hence Observe,

First, *If Princes use not their honour for Christ, Christ will pour dishonour upon Princes.*

1 Sam. 2. 30. *Them that honour me, I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed.* When Princes act unlike themselves, God makes them unlike themselves, vile and contemptible. The Apostle speaks of himself and of his fellow Apostles in (1 Cor. 4. 9.) *I think that God hath set forth us the Apostles last, as it were appointed unto death, for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to Angels, and to men.* As the Lord suffers his Saints to have contempt poured upon them by the world, and to be made a spectacle of scorn; so he himself poureth contempt upon the greatest of worldly Princes, he setteth them as upon a Theatre or open Stage, that all may behold and look upon them, and say, Thus hath God done with the men who had no delight to honour him. Since thou wast precious in my sight (saith God of his meanest people, Isa. 43. 4.) thou hast been honourable; that is, altogether honourable in thy self, and honoured by all men who know thy worth: and when once highest Princes are vile in the sight of God, they become dishonourable, even altogether dishonourable in themselves, as also in the eye and esteem of all men who know their unworthiness. And when Princes are thus become dishonourable, they are within a step of becoming miserable. The Psalmist had no sooner said, *He poured contempt upon Princes,* but presently it follows, *and causeth them to wander in the wilderness where there is no way,* (Psal. 107. 40.) When Princes are under contempt, they are uncertain of their course, they are entangled in their counsels, they are in a maze, and know neither their way, nor their end, but are at their wits end, and at their honours end, both together. We have a Prophecy of a glorious Kingdom (Isa. 32. 1.) *Behold a King shall reign in righteousness, and Princes shall rule in judgement, &c.* Then (vers. 5.) *The vile person shall no more be called liberal, or Prince. Nabal shall not glory in this title Nadib.* Nabal is a fool, and Nadib is a Prince. In that Kingdom, fools or vile persons shall no more be honoured nor adored like golden Idols. Men shall be known what they are, and called what they deserve. Then,
Princes

Princes who misapply their power, and refuse to be *nursing Fathers* to the Church, then, Princes who bring not their glory to the new *Jerusalem*, and submit not their crowns unto the Lamb, even all they who are a terror to the good, and praise them who do evil, *shall no more be named gracious Lords*, but shall go forth with everlasting shame (in stead of a crown) upon their heads. Swelling titles will be no Sanctuary against those viols of contempt, ready to be poured out upon all contemners of Christ, and opposers of his throne for ever.

Secondly Observe,

They that have received much honour from God, shall receive much shame from him, if they abuse their honour.

Proportional to the honour they have received will the contempt be which they shall receive. God doth not drop, but pour honour upon Princes, therefore he will not drop, but pour contempt upon them by whole buckets full, it shall come down as a sweeping rain. As they who have had, not only as *Moses* speaks of his, *doctrine dropping as the rain, and speech distilling as the dew*, but Gospel knowledge pouring down upon them, these shall not have some drops of anger, but God will pour out his anger and his fury upon them, if they are unfruitful, or bring not forth fruit meet for his (their Masters) use. They that have had but a drop or two of the word, shall have comparatively but a drop of judgement. That's the reason why it shall be easier for *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*, for *Tyre* and *Sidon* then for *Bethsaida* and *Chorazin*, at the day of Judgement, *Matth. 11. 12.* Justice looks to the measure, as well as to the matter of sin, in pronouncing punishments. *He poureth contempt upon Princes.*

And weakeneth the strength of the mighty.

The Hebrew is, *He weakneth the Girdle of the mighty.* The Vulgar and the Septuagint are very bold with this text, in their translations, giving a sense hardly reconcileable to the Original. *He releiveth those that are oppressed*, saith the one, *He bealeth those that are humble*, saith the other: Both wide enough from our reading, *He weakneth the strength of the mighty.* The word signifies Rivers and Torrents, which run with a mighty force.

He

*Humiles autem
sanavi Sept.
אֶיִקִּים
Sunt aqua cum
impetu fluentes.*

He looseth the strength or Girdle of the mighty; the same word notes a girdle and strength, because a girdle causeth strength, or is an advantage to put out our strength; for though now men usually ungird themselves when they go about strong labour, yet in those times it was not so; *Job* speaks according to the custom of those Eastern Countries, who (wearing long garments) when they prepared for travail or labour, girded up themselves, that so they might be more nimble and expedition. *Job* had said, *vers.* 19. He overthroweth the mighty; here he saith, He weakneth the strength of the mighty. There is a difference between these two: There, he bringeth a greater power, and so overthroweth them. As 'tis said in the Gospel, though a strong man armed keep the house, yet when a stronger comes, he spoils him. But here 'tis said, He weakneth the strength of the mighty, that is, He abateth or draweth out their strength. As the waters of a great River, being drawn out by Sluces, the strength of the River is weakned: So the Lord drains and draws out the strength of mighty men, and weakens them. It is storied, that when *Cyrus* besieged *Babylon*, which was encompassed with a mighty River, the River *Euphrates*, he made many Sluces and Cuts, which fetched out all the water from the River, and so surprised them in the height of security, they thinking the place impregnable, and having also a prophetic, That the City should never be taken till the River proved their enemy. Thus the Lord, he sluiceth out the strength of the strongest men, their personal strength, the strength of their arms and legs, their relational strength, the strength of their friends, allies, and confederates; so some understand this place: There is a girdle of strength wherewith one Nation is tyed to another, such are Leagues of amity and mutual aid: The Lord weakneth this strength also, and makes them who were a help, a hurt unto their Neighbours. He saith, Gird your selves and ye shall be broken in pieces, gird your selves and ye shall be broken in pieces take counsel together and it shall come to nought, *Isa.* 8. 9, 10. The strength of all creatures associated, is too weak for the single strength of God.

Significat non fortitudinem sed cingulum; siquidem virum sedes in lumbis qui cingulo muniuntur, vel quod vires auget, cincti enim robustiores sunt, & habiliores ad opus faciendum. Dru- Eos qui oppres- si sunt relevans Vulg.

Hence Observe,

All the strength of man is at the pleasure and dispose of God.

He overthroweth strength, not only by overpowering it, but by unpowring it. He can always bring more strength than we have,

R r

or

or lesson the strength which he have. As we cannot master Gods strength, so we are not masters of our own. *Sampsons* strength was a terrour to the *Philistins*, but as soon as God was gone from him, his strength was gone, and then they despised him, who before trembled at him; and called him out to make them sport, whose presence had so often spoiled their sport. How many mighty men hath God weakned? How many invincible Armies and Armadoes of men (as proud men have stiled them) hath God conquered? How many potent Kingdoms and Common-wealths hath God reduced to confused heaps? *Once hath God spoken, yea twice have I heard thus, that power belongeth unto God, also unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy* (Psal. 62. 11, 12.) 'Tis safest for us to fly to this mercy, seeing we can neither fly from, nor stand before this power. *Thou hast a might arme, O God, strong is thy hand, and high is thy right hand*, Psal. 80. 13. The weaknes of God is stronger than man: And before God all mans strength is turned into weaknes. All the instances which *Job* hath already given, prove this great truth, *That with God is wisdom and strength*; and lest any should think it is not yet proved enough, he is ready in the two next verses to give us yet a further, and (if a clearer may be) a clearer proof.

JOB Chap. 12. Verſ. 22. 23.

*He discovereth deep things out of darkness, and
bringeth out to light the shadow of death.*

*He increaseth the Nations, and destroyeth them: he
enlargeth the Nations and straitneth them again.*

WE have seen, in the former context, how large a testimony Job hath given of the power and wisdom of God; producing many proofs which speak both no less than infinite. And because those were particular and personal, therefore he giveth us (in these two verses) two more which are general, and National. *He discovereth deep things out of darkness. He increaseth the Nations, &c.* Here's providence unlocking secrets, opening those things which were sealed up, these acts are attended with suitable effects, *The increasing and destroying, the enlarging and straitening of the Nations.*

Verſ. 22. *He discovereth deep things out of darkness.*

The word properly signifies to unfold that which is wrapped up, or to manifest that which is hidden. Deep places are hidden places. God discovereth those things which are most hidden, even deep things out of darkness: *Deep things, and darkness* are put together, because that which is deep is dark. The further we remove from the Fountain of light, the more darkness prevails over us; and therefore every degree of deepness adds a degree of darkness, all depth being downward, and so a departure from the Sun. *In the beginning darkness was upon the face of the deep,* (Gen. 1. 1.) but darkness is always in the bottome of the deep, *He discovereth deep things out of darkness,* that is, the remotest, lowest, and most retired depths. These deep things may be referred to two heads.

נִלְהָ אֶמְלֵה
De revelatione
occultorum pro-
prie usurpatur.
Profunda tene-
bris obducta &
operta sunt.
Pined.

There are deep things of God; and deep things of men.

The deep things of God are, First his thoughts (Psal. 92. 5.) *O Lord, how great are thy works? and thy thoughts are very deep:* so deep, that all the line of mans understanding is not able to sound or fathom them. The thoughts of God are his decrees and counsels, he doth not think to resolve, but his thoughts are his

resolutions. The thoughts of God are ſo deep, that the Apoſtle (with a mixture of amazement and adoration) cries out, *O the depth* (Rom. 11. 33.) Secondly, The deep things of God are his word, containing either Doctrines to be believed, or Propheſies to be fulfilled. *The word of God hath its ſhallows, and it hath its depths: there a Lamb may wade, and there an Elephant may swim.*

Secondly, There are deep things of men; which are of divers forts.

1. His word is deep. Though the words of moſt men float upon their tongues, yet *Solomon* assures us that, *The words of a mans* (that is, as the word imports, of an excellent mans) *mouth are as deep waters* (Prov. 18. 4.) A wiſe prudent man ſpeaks Oracles, and when you hear the ſound, and underſtand the Grammatical ſenſe, you do not preſently reach the depth of what is ſpoken. As ſome ſpeak ſhallowly, ſo they hear ſhallowly; they dive not into thoſe deep waters which flow from a wiſe mans mouth. He ſpeaks wiſdom in a myſtery, or myſteries of wiſdom.

2. There is a depth in a man, deeper than his words, and that is the depth of his thoughts (Pſal. 64. 6.) *Both the inward thought of every one of them, and the heart is deep.* *The heart is often put for the inward thought, but here, the inward thought is an act of the heart, and the heart is the faculty, or power of thinking.* *Counſel in the heart of a man is like deep water* (Prov. 20. 5.) The heart of man is a great deep, ſo deep that none can find it out but God himſelf, Jer. 17. 10. *I the Lord ſearch the heart, &c. What man* (ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 Cor. 2. 11.) *knoweth the things of a man* (that is, thoſe things which lie in the heart of man) *but the ſpirit of a man which is in him.* Some men flatter themſelves that God himſelf cannot find out the things of their ſpirit: Hence that woe in the Prophet (Iſa. 29. 15.) *Woe unto them that ſeek deep to hide their Counſel from the Lord.* Doubtleſs they had ſome hopes to hide their counſel from God, elſe they would never have ſought to hide them. They ſhewed themſelves fooliſh enough in ſeeking to hide them, but they had proclaimed themſelves more fools in ſeeking to hide them, if they had been convinced they could not. But though no depth of mans heart can hide his counſel from God, yet many men have depth enough in their hearts, and to ſpare, to hide their counſels from men.

3. There

3. There is in a man a depth of Doctrine or Opinion; which is also called the *depth of Satan* (Rev. 2. 24.) *As many as have not known the depths of Satan*: Those depths of Satan were the dark opinions, and false Doctrines of Seducers: These called their opinions depths or profundities: and the holy Ghost addeth an Epithete, *depths of Satan*. As if he had said, you call your opinions depths, and so they are, but they are such depths as Satan hath brought out of Hell, they are the whisperings and hissings of that Serpent, not the inspirations of God. The Doctrine of Antichrist (that great Merchant of Error) is called a *mystery of iniquity*, (2 Thes. 2. 7.) A mystery is a truth shut up, or lying in the deep; The deep and dark mysteries of the wicked, will God reveal, vers. 8. For he *discovereth deep things out of darkness*.

Darkness may be taken two ways. There is natural darkness, which is only the privation of natural light: and there is a metaphorical darkness, which is the privation of moral light. This darkness is in many through their ignorance; and this darkness is made by others through their knowledge. The infinite knowledge of God makes a darkness to hide his ways and counsels in, and so doth the knowledge of men. They keep their projects and purposes under the vails and visors of specious pretences, and studied secrecies. Out of all this darkness God discovers deep things.

The latter clause of the verse is but an heightning of this, *He bringeth out to light the shadow of death*.

Shadow of death, is taken two ways.

First, For extream danger.

Secondly, For extream darkness.

For extream danger, Psal. 23. 4. *Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, that is, in deadly danger, yet I will fear no evil.*

But here, *shadow of death*, is put for extream darkness; the Grave is a place of darkness, and things that are buried lie in the dark. (Job 34. 22.) *There is no darkness nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves*, that is, the workers of iniquity cannot be hid in the thickest darkness. The shadow of death is the highest, the most superlative degree of thickest darkness: As if Job had said, God doth not only bring deep things out of darkness, but the deepest things out of the

greatest darkness, out of that darkness that is as deep and dark as the Grave.

When counsels lie so deep, that the persons who have laid them, have not so much as any jealousy they shall be discovered; when counsels lie so deep that others have no hope that ever they should be discovered; yet then the Lord discovereth them, and this is to bring out to light the shadow of death.

Hence Observe,

First in general, *All things are known unto God.*

He that makes all things known, must need know all things: and he that makes those things known, which are most unknown, cannot but know these things which are easily known. He that can expound a Riddle, can tell the meaning of a plain saying; and he that discovers deep things out of darkness, cannot but see those things that lie in the open Sun. Unless God were infinite in knowledge, he could not make these things known. (*Eccles. 7. 24.*) *That which is far off and exceeding deep, who can find it out?* The wise man sends a challenge to the wise men of the world, to find out the wisdom of God: that's the thing which is far off not only from our senses, but from our understanding. That's it which is exceeding deep. Deep, deep as the Original expresseth it, deep to Men, deep to Angels, and too deep for both. Who can find this out? no man can find any thing of it by his own light: and there are none who receive light to find it all out. God is light, and he dwells in light: and as he hath no darkness at all in him, so nothing is dark to him. He perfectly knows his own creating wisdom: *Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight, but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.* Many things are covered as to the eye of the world, they have Masks and Clouds cast over them, which eyes of flesh cannot see through, but these are all naked before the eye of God; yea they are as manifest and open to his eye, as a body is when dissected by the hand of a skilful Anatomist; he sees our bowels, and knows whether we are sound at heart or no. It is not the fairness of the skin, the cleanness of the outside, will deceive him; if there be any spots upon the Spirit, he discerns them, God needeth none to tell him what is in the heart of man, he makes his way into the depths of that darkness with his own eye.

Observe Secondly,

As

As God knows deep things, so he makes them known.

What is always open to himself, he sometimes revealeth unto man. God discovers both the deep things which himself or man doth or speaketh.

First, He revealeth the deep things which himself speaketh. Unless God expound his own word, all our glosses will but corrupt it; For, *No Prophecie of Scripture is of any private interpretation* (2 Pet. 2. 20.) By private interpretation, the Apostle means not the interpretation of one or of a few private men, for possibly, one or a few, and he or they not invested with any publike Commission, may give a true sense of Scripture, when many, and they called to a publike office, mistake and go wrong. But by private interpretation, he brands that Comment which flows from a mans own brain or phancy, without the consent of other Scriptures, or the reachings of the spirit. No Scripture, whether Doctrinal or Prophetical, is of any such private, that is, humane Interpretation. Man with all his wit, learning, and parts, cannot interpret the word of God, only the spirit of God can, or they can who are assisted by the spirit.

Propriam interpretationem non opponit communi sive publicæ sed adventitium Spiritus sancti donum, ei solertia, vel ei ingenij vigori qui sit a natura hominibus quantumvis ingeniosis insus Beza.

So much the Text in Peter now cited holds out clearly in the letter, and yet some of the Learned give another exposition of it. For the words shew us rather the authority and original of the Scriptures, than the way of their Interpretation. The Apostles Scope being to prove that the Prophets did not declare their own private opinions, but the mind of God in what they spake. And that therefore the word of Prophecie, as the Apostle adviseth in the former verse, is to be heeded carefully. The words following lead us also to the same sense (vers. 21.) *For the prophecie came not in the old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.* The Prophets were the Interpreters of the mind of God to the people, not the Messengers of their own minds. The false Prophets vended their own dreams, and ran of their own heads before they were sent, therefore their Prophecies were of a private Interpretation, that is, they opened only that to the people, which themselves were Authors of, so did not the true Prophets. They said, *Thus saith the Lord*, or as Paul, *We have received of the Lord, that which we deliver unto you.* From all it appears that the Apostle is speaking of the pedigree, not of the Exposition of Prophetical Scriptures. Yet the truth is as evident for the one as for the other.

Sensus Petri Apostoli hic videtur esse, Prophetas non suæ mentis sensum edidisse, sed fuisse interpretes consilij divini, vel prophetas non suam sed Dei mentem hominibus exposuisse Camer. Myroth. Evang.

other. As the Scripture it self is not the interpretation of mans mind, so neither is any true interpretation of Scripture from the meer mind of man. *The spirit of God (in man) searcheth all things, even the deep things of God, 1 Cor. 2. 10.* And without the spirit, man cannot find any thing of God, no nor that which lyeth uppermost or most in sight.

Again, He revealeth the deep things which himself doth. Surely the Lord will do nothing but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the Prophets (Amos 3. 7.) The secret intended by the Prophet, was the decree and purpose of God to bring evil upon that Land, to take away the voyce of mirth and gladness, and to make them an astonishment, an hissing, and a perpetual desolation. The secret of such decrees God reveals to his Prophets, that they may warn the people, either to prevent or prepare for the evil which is to come. When God was about to destroy Sodom, he saith, *Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do? Gen. 18. 17.* God revealed the rising and fall of the Kingdoms of this world, the rising and fall of the Kingdom of Antichrist, the making of the Kingdoms of this world, the Kingdoms of the Lord and of his Christ, all these the Lord revealed by the spirit unto the Apostle John, by him collected into that book called *The Revelation*. In the eighth of *Daniel* (vers. 13.) Christ is stiled *Palmoni*, which we translate, *a certain Saint*, but in the Margents of our Bibles we put, *The Numberer of secrets*, or, *a wonderful Numberer*. Christ is the Numberer of secrets, he tells them over, and hath them all (as we say) at his fingers ends, he can give an account of them at an instant, both how many they are, and what they mean. When Nebuchadnezzar desired to hear the interpretation of his dream, Daniel ascribes all to God, *He revealeth the deep and secret things, he knoweth what is the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him, Dan. 2. 22.*

Besides these deep and dark things which concern future events, the Lord revealeth also the deep things of Doctrine, the supernatural mysteries of Religion: The Incarnation of his Son, the Resurrection of the body, the mystery of justifying Faith, and of the new birth, which are absurdities to nature; these are all revealed in the word of God to our ears, and by the Spirit of God to our hearts.

Secondly, As the Lord revealeth the deep things which himself doth or speaketh, so also the deep things of mans doing or speaking,

*Qui occulta in
numerato ha-
bet. Juno*

speaking whether they be good or evil. Though the finner go as deep as Hell, yet himself and his sin, are under the eye of God. Thou (saith the Psalmist) hast set our iniquities before thee, and our secret sins in the light of thy countenance. When God intends to punish iniquity, he is said to set it before him, but whether he do or no, it is before him. And as our secret iniquity is always before him, so he sometimes sets it before men. (Eccles. 10. 20.) Curse not the King, no not in thy thought, and curse not the rich in thy Bed chamber, for a Bird of the air shall carry the voyce, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter. Solomon warns those who wickedly conspire against Kings, and persons in authority, to consider, as their sin, so their danger, for though they carry the matter never so closely, God can make it known: 'Tis hard for a man to conceal his own thoughts (when the minde is full it may quickly run over at the mouth) but 'tis easie with God to find out a way for the revealing of our thoughts. *A Bird of the air shall carry the voyce*: But what's the voyce of a thought? or, How comes a Bird into the bed-chamber? The bed-chamber is the surest place, and a thought is the most secret act: what can be more secret than a thought? Who can hear the sound of our thoughts, or understand their Language? We say, *Thought is free*. Thoughts fall not under the Cognisance, or censure of any Court. That which fears no evidence, fears no sentence: Yet, God to whom our thoughts are evident, can send in evidence against our thoughts. *A Bird of the air shall carry the voyce* of that which hath no voyce. It is a proverbial speech, to note, that by the most unlikely means, if other means fail, God will reveal those curses, and reveal them speedily. As if he had said, *Rather than such secret wickedness shall be undiscovered, God will make Birds speak, and Chamber-doors speak, the stone out of the Wall, and the beam out of the Timber shall speak, rather than silence shall cover such a wickedness*. More distinctly, when he saith, *A bird of the air shall carry the voyce*, he implies two things. First, that it shall be revealed by some unexpected means, or by means as little suspected for the doing of such a thing as a bird is. As, when Balaam went on sinfully, *The dumb Asse speaking with mans voyce*, forbad the madness of the Prophet; Balaam little dreamt of such a reprovcr: and these shall as little dream of such a Tale-bearer. Secondly, This phrase of speech implies that the matter shall be revealed

Qua in cogitatione revolvuntur, de facili verbo proferuntur etiam praeter intentionem proferentis Lyr. in Eccles.

*Principes &
potentiores ſunt
auritiſſimi, vix
quicquam fit
aut dicitur
quod ipſorum
cognitionem fu-
giat. Jun.*

by ſome ſpeedy means. *A bird ſhall do it*: the Meſſenger ſhall not go but run, he ſhall not run but fly, *A Pegasus ſhall be the Poſt*, he ſhall have wings added to his feet, he ſhall have wings inſtead of feet. The Angels are deſcribed with wings in Scripture to ſhew their ſpeed, a winged Meſſenger ſhall be diſpatcht on this Errand. Once more, as ſome reſerr this diſcovery purely to the providence of God, ſo others to the policy of Princes, who have their ſpies flying like birds in all places; men no more ſeared to carry the report of what is ſpoken, than a bird is. They have their Intelligencers in every Bed-chamber, men no more ſeared to carry the report of what is ſpoken, than the Chamber doors are. In the ſame ſenſe that Kings are ſaid to have *long hands*, we may ſay alſo that they have *long ears*: They have *long hands*, becauſe they can uſe means to ſtrike thoſe that are far from them: and they have *long ears*, becauſe they can uſe means to hear thoſe who are far from them. But whether we take this or the former Interpretation, the point is equally confirmed, for even thoſe diſcoveries which are made by men, are ordered and brought on by the wiſe and holy providence of God, who doth ſo hate evil, and all the works of moral darkneſs, eſpecially the curſing of Kings and lawful Magiſtrates, that he will diſcover them out of all the deeps, either of natural or artificial darkneſs.

Further, God bringeth good things as well as evil, juſt and holy aſions, as well as ſinful and unjuſt, out of the deeps of darkneſs; *Many works of light lye in darkneſs*: many excellent things are under concealment. *Dauids integrity lay in the dark*, yet God brought it forth as the light, and his innocency as the Noon day. *God is not Unrighteous, to forget or conceal, either our labour of love, or labours in Holineſs, though men doe.*

Laſtly, How great an experiment hath God given us of this truth, in that grand diſcovery which he hath made to the world (in this latter age) of *another world*. A great part of the world, even ſo great as bears the name of a *new world*, was a deep thing of darkneſs, to this part of the world, for many and many ages and generations. No man ſo much as dream'd of ſuch Nations as are now diſcovered. The ſurface of thoſe huge Countries was as little known to us as the center of the earth is: yea it was judged a kind of Hereſie in ancient times, to ſay there were

were *Antipodes*. But now 'tis known that the feet of our Brethren have walked opposite to the soles of our feet; and we have not only experience but light of reason enough to evince it. God hath made Art a key to nature, and hath discovered many deep things out of that darkness to us, which our fore-fathers never saw. Thus we see, that *deep things*, both Divine and Humane, and these both practical and natural, are fetcht out of darkness by the mighty power and unsearchable wisdom of God.

There are three ways by which God makes discoveries of evil polts or practises, lying in deepest darkness.

First, By the *confession* of the person whose head hath contrived, or his hand acted them. *Evil in the heart drops out at the mouth*, and this two ways.

1. By Queries and Questions put to the guilty. Such are often entrapt in their own answers, and their own tongues are a witness against themselves. As speech bewrayeth whence men are, so what they have been doing (*Prov. 20. 5.*) *Counsel in the heart of man is like deep water, but a man of understanding will draw it out.* He draws it out by questions and examinations. When those black waters will not flow out of themselves, they are pumped up by the art and industry of others.

2. A confession of these deep things out of darkness is made by the workings of a mans own conscience. When conscience is touched and beginneth to ake, that will tell tails; It is hard for a man at such a time to keep his own counsel. It was the caution of an ancient, *Be afraid of doing any thing which is ill, though there be no witness but thy self*: If thou could'st do it thy conscience taking no notice of it, thou mightest possibly keep it secret, but whatsoever thou doest, is done in the eye of conscience, therefore take heed. We have a saying, *that Murther will out*, and if nothing else bring it out, *conscience will*: *Conscience will examine a man as strictly as any Inquisitor in Rome*. And as men examined and tortured by severe Inquisitors, confess what they would not, so also do they who are examined and put upon the Rack by their own consciences.

Secondly, *God revealeth deep things immediately by his own spirit*: As the spirit revealeth the holy counsels of God to us, so the most secret evil designs and counsels of men (*2 King. 6. 11.*) When the King of Syria could take no counsel but it was presently discovered,

covered, he might well be cast into a suspicion, that some about him were false to him, and held correspondence with the enemy, *Therefore* (saith the story) *the heart of the King of Syria was sore troubled for this thing, and he called his servants and said unto them, Will ye not shew me which of us is for the King of Israel? And one of his servants said, none my Lord O King but Elisa the Prophet that is in Israel; telleth the King of Israel the words that thou speakest in thy bed chamber.* The Spirit of God revealed the deep counsels of the Syrian King unto the Prophet, and the Prophet revealed them to men.

There is a third way which is more common, by which the Lord discovers deep things out of darkness, and that is, by *wonderful providences*; he makes some acts of his own providence as Keyes to unlock the secrets of men, as hands to pluck off the Vails, as winds to dispel the clouds, and scatter the mists which hid their actions or intentions. In the History of *Joseph*, we have an admirable demonstration of this: It was a secret, a deep thing of darkness that his brethren conspired against him, they sold him into *Egypt*, and brought his torn coat home all bloody to his father, which caused the plain-hearted old man to conclude, *That some evil beast hath devoured him.* Thus the matter was locked up; yet God makes several acts of his providence as Keys to open it. First, *Famine* pincheth *Jacob* and his family, then *Joseph's* brethren must into *Egypt*, and after one journey they must make a second, and then *Benjamin* must be detained, and *Simeon* bound; here was a strange series and succession of providences till the whole matter was discovered. The *Gunpowder plot* was a deep thing of darkness, a strange Monster (*Cui lumen ademptum*) which saw no light, not only because it never took effect, but because it was kept so close a long time under Oaths, and strongest concealments, that there was not the least suspicion of it, yet by a strange providence God discovers this deep thing out of darkness: a letter written with uncouth expressions, and by mistake put into a wrong hand, was the occasion of bring all to light. *Later times* have given us great experiences of this; The best intelligences we have had of secret counsels have been from their Cabinets who contrived them.

Take four Corollaries from this.

First, be afraid to do or to plot any evil secretly: The Lord discovers

discover deep things out of darkneſs. Uſually they who do things that are not fit to be ſeen conceive they are not, or ſhall not been ſeen either in doing them, or when they are done. Flatter not your ſelves in this vain hope, you may caſt a vail upon them a while, but out they will at laſt.

Secondly, Be not afraid of the ſecret plottings of evil men, or of the deep things of their darkneſs, how deep ſoever the ways and counſels of men are laid, yet they are all above board to God. Suppose enemies are taking counſel againſt us, yet we have a powerful friend behind the Hangings, who hears every word they ſay, and ſets down in a book every reſolve they make, and will in fitteſt ſeaſon, both diſcover and diſappoint them. Let this be encouragement to all the faithful, their Father in Heaven knows and over-rules the darkeſt deſigns of wicked men on earth.

Thirdly, *When men are plotting, let us be praying.* David knew Achitophel could give deſperate and deep counſel againſt him, therefore he prayeth, *Lord turn the counſel of Achitophel into fooliſhneſs*: As if he had ſaid, *Lord thou knoweſt what he hath adviſed. I do not, he is plotting againſt me, Lord take notice that I am praying unto thee; plots were never any match for prayer, nor the counſels of the wicked able to ſtand before the ſupplications of the righteous.*

Fourthly, *No mans uprightneſs ſhall be always hid*: God will clear the innocent, for he diſcovereth deep things out of darkneſs, he that manifeſts the guilt of all, will alſo manifeſt the innocency of his. There is ſeldom any eminent or ſingular good thing done in the world, but it falls under miſconſtruction, and often ſuch gloſſes are given as corrupt the contexture of ſincereſt works; for the concluſions of malice are ever like thoſe of Logic following (*Deteriorem partem*) the weaker and worſer part. How often is Holineſs miſcall'd Hypocriſie and zeal vain-glory? How often is contending for the faith, miſjudged faction, and contending againſt error, humour? In the miſt of all theſe dark thoughts of men concerning our works, this may bear up our hearts, that as God knows them what they are, ſo he will make them appear as they are. The Lord Chriſt comforts his Diſciples againſt all the calumnies and miſ-apprehenſions of the world, though they ſhould be called Beelzebubs, and made as black as Hell by traducing pens or tongues; yet ſaith he (*Matth.*

10 25) *Fear them not, for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed, and hid, that shall not be known: which words may have a double aim.*

1. To deterr the Disciples from concealing the word of God for fear of men. As if Christ had said; *Be ye bold and constant in delivering the message which I shall put into your mouths, declare to the world the whole counsel of God, keep not back, conceal not his truth, betray not his cause by a cowardly silence: for whatsoever plausible excuses you may make to palliate and hide this lowness and fullness of your spirits, yet at length all will out; and though you would not declare the truth of God to his glory, yet God will declare the whole truth concerning you to your shame; as the madness of your Persecutors shall be manifest, so also shall your fearfulness, therefore fear them not, What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in the light, &c. for what ye do, or forbear to do in darkness shall come to light, with the reasons of it.*

2. These words aim at the support of the Disciples under the slanders and spiteful opinions of men, when they fully and courageously declare and preach the word of God. As if he had said, *Your Innocency may be hid, and your Righteousness unknown, you may be called Beelzebub and Devil for speaking the truths of God, yet I will take a time to put off these ugly disguises, and render you even to the eye of the world such as you are, upright and honest men; my zealous and faithful messengers: for I assure you, there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed: and therefore your faithfulness to my cause and Gospel shall not; do ye reveal my hidden truths, and leave it to me to reveal your integrity, how much soever it may be hidden. Upon the same ground that wicked men are to fear; godly men are not to fear: wicked men have cause to fear, because their evil deeds shall be made manifest; and godly men are not to fear, yea they are to rejoyce, because their goodness and good deeds shall be made manifest: all their uprightness and faithful intentions for the promoting of the honour of Christ, and advancing of his Gospel, shall be set in the open light.*

Yet further, Though we should do much good, which is in the dark too, or hidden from our selves (for there are, as sins, so, in a sense, good works of ignorance,) or if we should have forgotten the good which we have done knowingly, yet the Lord will redeem our works out of this darkness also, the darkness I mean, whether of our own ignorance or forgetfulness, neither secrecy
nor

nor inscience nor oblivion, our own or others, can long cover a good work; let it be only our care to do good, it is the care of Christ that no good which we have done shall be lost or left in perpetual darkness. God makes many discoveries of deep things out of darkness here, and he will make an universal discovery at last: As that Apostolical Caution against rash judgment clearly imports (1 Cor. 4. 5.) *Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come who will bring to light the hidden things of darkness (whether good or bad) and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts (whether just or unjust) and then shall every man (who is praise worthy) have praise of God.* The Apostle in this **aims rather at the encouragement of the Saints, whose best actions are often hid, than at the terrour of the wicked,** who desire and hope that their evil actions shall be always hid. Thus we see how God discovers dark and deep things. In the next verse we shall see him altering and disposing, turning and changing great things, even the Nations of the earth.

Vers. 23. *He increaseth the Nations and destroyeth them, he enlargeth the Nations and straitneth them.*

Here are two acts of providence, like Chequer-work, a white and a black: an act of mercy, and an act of judgment, and an act of the right hand, *increasing and enlarging*, and an act of the left, *destroying and straitning Nations*. God doth not only abase particular persons how great soever they are (*Loosing the bond of Kings, and pouring contempt upon Princes, &c.*) but he hath a controversie with whole Nations and Kingdoms, they shall be abased and smart under his hand, if they go on provoking and sinning against him.

He increaseth the Nations.

The word which we translate to *increase*, hath a double derivation. Some take it from a Root which signifies to augment or multiply. Others take it from a Root which signifies to erre or wander, and in construction, to *deceive*. Hence some render, *He deceiveth the Nations, and destroyeth them*: so the Septuagint; and it is a truth, God deceiveth the Nations, he leaveth them to their own mistakes, or to the evil counsels of others, and then *destroyeth them*. Destruction is usually let in by misapprehension.

Non solum Deus sue potentia ac sapientia documenta prebet, in his quæ unius vel alterius regis sunt, sed in universa aliqua multitudine & numerosissimo populo. Merc.

כִּוַּח Crescere; multiplicare.
שׁוּחַ Errare.
Πλανῶν ἔθνη
ἢ ἀπολλύων αὐτά.
Decipiens gentes & perdens eas. Sept.

The

The judgment of God upon the outward eſtate begins at a judgment upon the underſtanding. Seldom hath any Nation perished, but they ſee they have been befooled, and that they reſuſed their own good before they were deprived of it. As the text may bear this tranſlation, ſo the truth flowing from it, is very uſeful.

But becauſe the ordinary acception of the word runs ſaireſt, *He increaſeth the Nations, &c.* I ſhall inſiſt only upon that.

When God made the World, he ſaid to man, yea to every thing that had life in it, and ſo power of increaſing, *Increase and multiply: A word from God makes the creature multiply. The increate of every thing is from God, as well as the conſtitution of it.* There is a threetold increaſe. Firſt, In number: God ſaid to Abraham, *I will multiply thy ſeed as the ſand of the Sea, and as the Stars of Heaven,* and it was ſo. Secondly, He increaſeth Nations in riches and plenty; he bleſſeth their basket and their ſtore; they lend to others and do not borrow. Thirdly, He increaſeth Nations in honour and reputation, they are the head, and not the tail, the ſheaves of their Neighbours round about, fall down to their ſheave. Such honour is promiſed the Jews, *That ten men ſhall take hold out of all Languages of the Nations, even ſhall take hold of the ſkirt of him that is a Jew, ſaying, we will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you, (Zach. 8. 23.)* Thus the Nations are increaſed by a word or bleſſing from the mouth of God.

And as he increaſeth, ſo he deſtroyeth. The decaies of Nations are from God, as well as their improvements are. God declarerh his power by pulling down, as well as by raiſing up, by killing, as well as by making alive, by deſtroying, as well as by increaſing.

This deſtruction is wrought two ways, openly, or ſecretly. Sometimes *God is a Moth and rottenneſs* to a Nation, he deſtroies them ſilently, and unſeen (*Hof. 5. 12.*) they decline and moulder away, they know not how. Sometimes *he is a Lyon and as a young Lyon unto a Nation, he will tear and go away. and none ſhall reſcue* (*Hof. 5. 14.*) he deſtroieth them viſibly, by Diſeaſes and Plagues, by Famine and the Sword. By ſome one, or by all theſe, he deſtroieth them, till, as he threatned the Jews (*Iſa. 6. 11.*) *The Cities be waſted without Inhabitants, and the houſes without man, and the Land be utterly deſolate.*

The

The last branch of the verse is of the same importance with the former.

He enlargeth the Nations, and straitneth them again.

There is a different reading, for some render the former as an act of judgement, *He scattereth or subverteth the Nations*, and the later as an act of mercy, *He restoreth them again*. Thus he banished the Jews into *Babylon*, and after seventy years, brought them back to their own land. We understand the former clause as an act of mercy, the later of wrath and judgement.

The Original word signifies to expand or stretch a thing forth. When God increaseth a Nation, he enlargeth their borders, and having multiplied their number, gives them more room. As the enlargement of the Church is described by the Prophet (*Isa. 49. 20.*) such is the enlargement of Nations. *The Children which thou shalt have after thou hast lost the other, shall say again in thine ear, The place is too strait for me, give place to me that I may dwell.* As Bees swarm when the hive is overcharged, or as rivers overflowing break their bounds; so do the Nations of the earth, who are compared to great rivers. God sometimes opens these flood-gates, and lets them out like a mighty torrent. The irruptions of the *Goths* and *Vandals*, of the *Hunnes* and *Heruli*, are famous among Historians. And as barbarous Nations spread out themselves because of numbers, so do other Nations by their power. The *Babylonian*, the *Persian*, the *Cræcian*, the *Roman* Empires, extended the wings of their sovereignty all the world over.

Mr. Broughton translates, *He spreadeth the Nations and governeth them*; so both parts of that verse speak mercy to Nations; others of the learned joyn in that translation. The Hebrew word beareth that sense most properly, signifying to lead; yea, to lead gently, peaceably and quietly, as a shepherd leadeth his Flock, or as a Father his Childe. Many offerings of the Jews in their ceremonious worship, were denominated from this word, *Minchah*, because they were brought in such an honourable way, and presented before the Lord. The providence of God leads all people, his own people are led by a special providence, as the *Israelites* were in the day by a cloud, and in the night by a pillar of fire. *The Lord alone did lead them, and there*

Subversas in integrum restituit. Vulg. 70

וַיִּשְׁבֹּר וַיִּשְׁבֹּר Significat expandere vel extendere sicut cum aliquid expanditur ut exsiccat.

Longè latèq; super faciem terra propagat & dilatat eas. Druf.

וַיִּדְּרֵם Duxit deduxit placide & sensim sicut pastor gregem aut pater filium suum. Unde וַיִּדְּרֵם Quodlibet donum seu donarium honorem causa alicui oblatus, eo quod sensim & cum pompa quadam portetur. Rivet.

Expandit eas
super faciem
terrae, & ducit
eas in locum
perditionis
Merc. ex R.
Kinch.

was no strange God with him (Deut. 32. 12.) The Lord in mercy led forth the people, which he had redeemed, he guided them in his strength to his holy habitation (Exod. 15. 13) This interpretation runs fair. And while we, in stead of *he leadeth*, render, *he straitneth them*; we mean, he leadeth them into straits. As he spreadeth them out by prosperity, so he straitneth them by affliction. In this variety of reading, the scope and general sense of the text is the same, setting forth the irresistible power of God, in disposing Nations for the better, or for the worse, as he seeth cause, or as they give it him.

First Observe,

There is a vicissitude and change in Nations as well as in persons.

In this verse the scales go up and down, *he increaseth the Nations, and destroyeth them, he enlargeth them, and straitneth them again.* Particular men, are sometimes up, and sometimes down, sometimes well, and sometimes sick, sometimes enlarged, and sometimes straitned. Now as it is with the parts, so with the whole; and though the world be a dissimular body; yet in one notion it is a simular body, being all alike in subjection to vanity and change. What Nation is there but hath suffered many changes? This Nation hath been a great example of it, and so it is at this day: And unless we humble our selves before God, and *kiss the Son* least he be further angry, we have cause to fear greater changes then ever we have had. *Who knows what changes a year, yea a day may bring forth.* These two things are out of all question; 1. *That we have deserved the worst of changes.* 2. That the face of affairs looks as if we should every day change for the worse, till we come to the worst.

Secondly Observe,

All the changes in Nations are from God.

He increaseth and straitneth them, his providence (not fate) watcheth over them, to order all their motions. As the motions of single persons, so the motions of whole Kingdoms are ordered by a higher hand. *Divine providence acts upon every stage of worldly affairs in the world. There is a wheel in a wheel, Gods wheel moves in all the wheels of the creature:* States cannot do what they please, and go on after their own pleasure, God governs the Governours, as much as those who are governed. He leadeth them into waies of peace and prosperity, he also leadeth them

them into warres and troubles. We have both exprest (Jer. 31.

28.) *Like as I have watched over them, to pluck up and to break down, and to destroy, so will I watch over them, to build and to plant, saith the Lord.* No people in the world did ever find God more increasing or straitning them, then the Jews did. They were as set upon a Beacon, for all the world to look and gaze at: They were Gods peculiar treasure, yet he cast them out as dung or dross. He increased them in number, in riches and in honour. When the severest courses were taken to diminish them (as in Egypt by slaying the males) he then increased them: yet the hand of God was as eminent in destroying, as increasing them. More then six hundred thousand came out of Egypt, all whose carcases (excepting two) fell in the wilderness. God increased them again in Canaan, they were almost innumerable, when David numbred them; yet he destroyed and wasted them by the Babylonians. After their return from Babylon, they grew mighty again, at last God sent the Romans, who took their City and Temple from them: And how they have been scattered and emptied ever since, the Records of ancient times, and the experiences of this declare. What God did and hath done with the Nation of the Jews, he hath also done in many other Nations, and can do in all. He can lift them up or cast them down, give them a being or no being, a well being or a miserable being, at his pleasure. The absolute sovereignty and greatness of God, will bear him out in these great works, upon the greatest Nations. What's the greatness of any one, or of all Nations put together to the greatness of God? Behold (saith the Prophet, Isa. 40. 15.) *the Nations are as the drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the ballance.* A bucket full of water is no great matter to the Ocean, what then is a drop? All the weight that can be put into a pair of ballances is not much, what then is the light dust, which hangs about it? we know that bears no weight at all. It is no more for the great God to move the greatest Nation upwards or downwards, into an increase or a diminution, then to blow away the smallest dust. And as if a drop or a dust were too much, the 17th. verse assures us, that *All Nations before him are as nothing, and they are counted to him as less then nothing and vanity.* Nor can God ever want means to increase or destroy whole Nations, who made the whole world without means: *Cannot he speak a Nation into any thing,*

Fata quedam regnorum & gentium quidam esse volunt sed omnia talia nos docet Scriptura Dei natui & consilio immutabili tribuere. Merc.

who spake the world out of nothing? When a people increase in sin as much as in sovereignty, and are straitned in obedience and thankfulness to God who hath enlarged them, then he reduces them to their former nothing.

Job hath not yet done with this argument, but as he had told us of the judgements of God upon greatest persons before he spake of Nations, so now having spoken of the judgements of God upon Nations, he descends in his conclusion to those again which God sends upon eminent persons in the two last verses of this Chapter.

JOB Chap. 12. Vers. 24, 25.

He taketh away the heart of the chief of the people of the earth, and causeth them to wander in a wilderness where there is no way.

They grope in the dark without light, and he maketh them to stagger like a drunken man.

These two verses are the continuation and conclusion of Job's argument, lifting up the power and wisdom of God in his dispensations towards men.

In the former part of the Chapter we have discussed what God doth to persons and what to nations. Here Job turneth his speech upon a point which he had touched before, *He maketh the Judges fools*, or turneth their counsels into folly; Now, *He taketh away the heart of the chief of the people of the earth*.

He taketh away.

מסיר
סור Est recedere
declinare,
in Hiphil re-
movere recede-
re faciens.

Some read, *He changeth*, Others, *He removeth*, or *causeth to decline*. The Hebrew will bear either of those readings, *He taketh away*

The heart of the chief of the people of the earth.

The heart is the chief piece in any of the people of the earth. And here he taketh away the heart of the chief of the people of the earth.

earth. 'Tis sad when the chief part is taken away from the chiefest of the people.

The heart under a natural consideration is that noble instrument of life seated in the midst of the body : by a metaphor it signifies any thing which is seated in the middle, or toward the center, because the heart is so placed in the body. And by a *Synechdoche*, the heart is put frequently in Scripture for the motions of the heart, or for whatsoever acteth there. The understanding, will, affections, purposes, resolutions, or courage of man, any or all of these are expressed by the heart, because any or all these are wrought in, or issue from the heart.

To take away the heart, hath reference chiefly to these three things.

First, **He taketh away the understanding**, and leaveth men to the guidance of ignorance : and then they are hurried by gusts of passion, not ordered by the dictates of reason. God benights their minds, their foolish hearts are darkned, and so they become vain both in their imaginations and resolves. The chief of the earth are then neither able to give good counsel nor receive it, they who formerly were as Oracles, betray a feebleness of judgement, and the gravest States-men prove Infants in understanding. All whollome remedies, and proper expedients for their own good, or the publike safety, are taken from them when God taketh away their hearts. This was further shewed at the 17th verse, whether I refer the reader.

Secondly, **The heart is put for the will**. Some interpret this text, rather of the will then of the understanding : God is said to take away the will, when he takes it off from what it was set upon before, and causeth it to move and encline to another object (*Prov. 21 1.*) *The Kings heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water, he turneth it whether soever he will* : By the heart we are to understand the will of Kings ; turning properly concerns the will : The will putteth it self out to prosecute what the understanding dictates : *The will usually walketh in, or after the light of the understanding* : God works so effectually in the heart of the chief of the people of the earth, that though their understandings give them light to walk in such a way (whether it be a false or a true light or way, is not the point here) yet he can take their wills off from it, and turneth them whether soever he will. As the persons of Kings are in the hand of God to protect

*Cor per meta-
phoram signifi-
cat medium &
interius cujusq;
rei, per synech-
doch. n. omnia
quorum sedes
est in corde,
mens, voluntas,
&c.
Pined.*

*Cordis nomen
ad voluntatem
potius quam ad
intellectum hoc
loco pertinet.
Aquin.*

them, ſo their wills are in his hand to guide and over-power them. *They who are maſters of men, are not maſters of their own will. A King who rules others, is not under his own rule.* The ſimilitude is very elegant, God turneth his heart *even as the rivers, or ſprings of water*: Rivers of water are led by their channels, you may draw them this way or that way by cutting out water courſes. When the will of any one of the *chiefs of the earth* runs ſtrongly in ſuch a conſtant ſtream, God can ſtop it, cut out fluces (as it were) and give it a new channel, he can empty the ſtream of a Kings will, into a channel of his own making, and cauſe this river to run upon what ground he pleaſeth. Some of the Ancients obſerving what ſtrange courſes the hearts of moſt Kings have run, turn the interpretation of this text into another channel, telling us it muſt be expounded of the Saints who are *Spiritual Kings*. Do you think, ſay they, *that the heart of Pharaoh, Antiochus, Herod, or of Julian, was in the hand of God?* Doth God turn the heart into the waies of blood and perſecution againſt his people? Surely ſuch mens hearts are in the hand of the Devil, not of God, ſo they argue. But by their leave, we are not afraid to ſay, that even the hearts of wicked Kings are in the hand of God, yet he hath no hand in their wickedneſs, unleſs to bound it. The wills of the moſt wilfull Princes are flexible and moveable at the will of God, even while they move, yea ſpurn againſt it: he makes them ſubject to his ſecret will, while they are rebelling againſt his revealed will. They will not do the later, but the former is done upon them whether they will or no. *Some men are ſo wilfull that they turn their whole ſoul into will*; therefore is nothing of reaſon or underſtanding, nothing of love or affection appears in them, but all of will: Their ſouls are loſt in their wills: yet theſe wills God findes out and diſpoſeth of. The will of Princes (ſaith a Heathen) is ſtiff and ſtrong, unready and unwonted to the direction of others. They who are full of power think all muſt obey their wills; therefore to make their wills either ſubject or obedient, argues tranſcendent power. The wills of moſt men are ready to follow the wills of Princes, as the ſhadow doth the body: therefore to make their wills follow, is the work of God (*Eccleſ 8.4.*) Where the word of a King is, there is power, and who may ſay unto him, what doſt thou? Princes will not be ſtopped but by a ſuperiour power, their priviledge is great, and many times the

vio-

*Putas quod cor
ſaltant imp iſſi-
mi in manu Dei
ſunt? abſit ſed
de illis dicit,
qui regnant ſu-
per peccata.
Hic in
Pſal. 137.*

*Nec me fugit
quàm durum &
verè inſolens
ad recta ſpecti
regius noli tu-
mor. Senec.
Act. 1.*

violence of their spirits greater. As *Pilate* when some advised him to alter the inscription upon the cross of *Christ*, answers, *What I have written I have written*, it shall stand: so the chief of the earth say, *what we have done, we have done, what we have resolved, we have resolved*. Yet God who is chief above all the chiefs of the earth, taketh away, or removeth the hearts of the chief of the earth, they shall not alwaies will what they would. A good man doth the evil which he would not, and evil men do the good which they would not. God causeth them to will that the thing shall be done, though they have no will, either to the thing or to the doing of it.

Principum virorum illa vox est, Quod scripsi, scripsi.

Thirdly, The heart is put for *courage* and *fortitude*. God takes away the heart under this notion; he can make the most valiant men cowards, and pul down the highest spirits. As he gives women the courage of men, so he can make men less then women in courage (*Amos 2.14,15.*) The Prophet sheweth God taking away, not only fighting courage, but flying courage (so some understand that text) *The flight shall perish from the swift*, they shall not have a heart to shiit for themselves: they once made sure of it that they had legs to run, though no hands to fight, but their flight shall perish, they shall not have so much spirit left as to run away. The fighting courage of *Israel* was quite sunk (*Josh 7.5.*) *The hearts of the people melted and became as water*, that is, their courage failed. And it is threatned as a judgement (*Lev. 26.36.*) *I will send a faintness into their hearts*, And what shall the effect of this be? *The sound of a shaken leaf shall chase them, and they shall flee as fleeing from a sword*: they shall not only flee at the beating of a drum, at the sound of a trumpet, or at an Alarm to the battel, but at the sound of a shaking leaf, *Dent. 28.65.* *The Lord shall give thee a trembling heart.*

Any of these waies, the heart is in the hand of God, he can make an understanding heart foolish, a resolved wilfull heart flexible, and a stout couragious heart taint and fearful. He that had a heart like a *Lyon*, shall quake and be (as we say) *White-liverd* at the real appearance, yea at the shadow of danger. Thus the Lord sheweth his mighty power among the chief of the earth, in taking away their hearts.

God in Scripture calleth upon man to give him his heart:

My

My son give me thine heart. This act of God in the text is a chastening of the former neglect.

Hence Observe,

God taketh away their hearts, who will not give up their hearts unto him.

If we graciously give our hearts unto God, he will not judicially take our hearts from us. *We never have our understandings, our wills, our courage, so much in our own custody, as when we resigne them to Gods keeping.* God would so order them in us and for us, that we should have the command of them, were they once at his command. But if when he calleth, *Give me thine heart,* we or any of the chief of the earth say, no, we will not give our hearts to thee, not our understandings to judge for thee, not our wills to submit to thee, not our courage to act for thee: Then saith God, I will take away your hearts from you; you that use your understandings, your wills, your courage against me, shall not have them to use (*Hos 7 11.*) *Ephraim is called a silly dove without heart:* then the chief of the earth are like *silly doves* (though indeed ravenous Harpies) when God taketh away their hearts. The Saints are *innocent doves, without gall, and the wicked are silly doves, without a heart.* God threatneth his people to send them such Chiefs, Chiefs without an heart (*Ija 3 4 12.*) *I will give them Children to be their Princes, and women shall rule over them.* He doth not mean Children in age, or women in sex; for some women are of masculine spirits and have done valiantly. **Twas Deborah a woman who said, O my soul thou hast trodden down strength;* no man ever spake more like a man: Some Children in years have acted like the aged, *Josiah* did so. So then the Prophets meaning is, I will give them rulers that shall be as little in understanding, as Children are in stature, their reason shall scarce be a cubit high; I will give them Chiefs, that shall be as timorous as women naturally are: Their courage shall scarce serve them to see their own blood without swooning, much less to venture their blood in any honourable service. Thus God takes away the hearts of the chief of the people, when either they or the people refuse to give God theirs.

רָאשֵׁי עַם

Caput populi.

Again, the Hebrew is, *He taketh away the heart of the [Heads] of the people of the earth.* The Leaders and Governours of a people, are their Heads: That's the language of the old Testament every

every where. It is ill when the heart is taken from the *heels* or *lowest* of the people, but how miserable is it, when the heart is taken from the *heads* or *highest* of the people. A people whose heads have no heart, are upon the matter headless. *A heartless head, is no better than no head.*

Lastly Observe,

All mankind is not of one rank.

We have here the people, and the Heads of the people. As the natural body is distinguished into superiour and inferiour, into noble and ignoble parts, so is the political body: As that body is a Monster, which is all head, or whose head is too big for the body, so is that which hath no head, or a head too little for the body. Where all govern there is no Government, and where all are chief there can be no order. And as God hath appointed some to the dignity of Headship, for the preservation of order, so it is their duty who are Heads to preserve order. The head takes care naturally for the whole body, the head sees for the foot, and respects the little finger. Magistrates are Rulers over the persons of the people, but they are servants to the good of the people. A people ought to serve their Rulers, yet Rulers are the greatest servants. As it is the duty of all to serve them, so it is their office to serve all. *He taketh away the heart of the chief, or, of the heads of the people.* And what then?

None of the works of God are without effect, when he acteth somewhat will come of it, here is a threefold effect following this judiciary act of God in taking away the heart of the *Chief of the earth.*

1. *They wander in a Wilderness where there is no way.*
2. *They grope in the dark without light.*
3. *They stagger like a drunken man.*

The first of these effects is laid down in the latter clause of the 24th verse.

He causeth them to wander.

The word which we translate, to wander, signifies both corporal and mental wandering; the error of the foot and the error of the mind. 'Tis put for corporal wandering (*Gen. 20. 13.*) *When God caused me (saith Abraham) to wander from my fathers house;* and again, *Gen. 37. 15.* 'Tis put for mental wandering, *Psal. 119. ult.* *I have gone astray like a lost sheep, seek*

*נחש וסורפא-
tur de errore
cordis aqne ac
de errore pedis.*

thy servant; Isa. 63. 17. *O Lord, why hast thou made us to erre from thy ways?*

But that which is most considerable here, is the act of God, *He causeth them to wander*; This intimates an efficiency: Hence 'tis questioned, How doth God cause man to wander? God doth not lead man into false ways; nor doth he hinder man from going in those which are good and right; thus God causeth no man to wander: And yet he doth more than barely permit or suffer man to wander; he is active in it, *He caused them to wander*. For the clearing of it, I answer,

First, God judgeth and pronounceth such unworthy of light, who have abused it, or that he should clear their minds with the knowledge of his truth, who have not obeyed his truth, but held it in unrightness.

*Non quod in
falsitatem eos
inducat, sed
quia lumen su-
um eis subtrahit
ne veritatem ne-
noscant, &c.
Aquín.*

Secondly, Upon the passing of this dreadful sentence, he with- draweth or with-holdeth his light from them. They must needs wander who walk in darkness, and unless God continue his light, we return to our own darkness. The setting of the Sun is enough to make the surface of the earth and the air dark, because they have no inherent light: **God needs not infuse dark- ness into us, to make us dark, we in our selves are nothing but darkness.**

Thirdly, Having withdrawn his light, God proceeds to an act of tradition, delivering such up into the hands of their own dark lusts and black affections, yea he delivers such up into the hand of Satan, who is the Prince of darkness, and who hath darkness enough to cast into the mind of man, till it be filled with darkness. *If our Gospel be hid* (said the Apostle, 2 Cor. 4. 3, 4.) *it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the God of this world hath blinded the eyes of their mind, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the Image of God, should shine unto them.* Satan is Gods Executioner: the God of this world blinds their eyes who see not the offered light of God, and the more it is offered and neglected, the more he blinds them, and the more they wander. They wander who never saw the light, but they wander most dangerously who are blinded with the light, or because they have abused it.

Fourthly, The Lord is said to cause men to wander, because he ordereth the objects and occasions, the means and manner, the steps and degrees of their Aberrations. They who wander
most

most out of the way of Obedience, cannot wander out of the eye and way of providence. The providence of God is ever in its way, even in reference to them who wander out of the way. They who act most confusedly, indisposedly, and erroneously, are kept in a due course and method, as to the purpose and designe of God. The Prophet *Isaiah* (Chap. 20. 20.) speaks of a *Bridle* that shall be in the jaws of the people, causing them to erre or wander. A bridle is rather to keep in the way than to carry out of the way. The place is of a difficult Interpretation: most expound it of the power of the Babylonians, which being put into the jaws of the Jewish Nation, caused them to wander out of their own country into captivity, yea and caused many of them to erre and wander from the way of holy Doctrine and Worship. However, we may allude to that Scripture for the clearing of the point in hand, though we make no proof of it. The bridle of providence is in the jaws of many men, even in the jaws of the heads of the earth, causing them (as *Job* speaks here) to wander, and yet while they are wandering, that bridle rules and holds them within the compass of divine pleasure. Thus the Lord who guides his people in his own way, causeth many to wander in a Wilderness where there is no way, and yet guideth them in their wanderings. For as the darkness is no darkness to God, so the wilderness is no wilderness to God: his providence is in a clear way to the fulfilling of his own counsels, how much or how long soever he causeth men to wander from theirs.

In a Wilderness.

We are not to take this *wilderness* literally, as if the meaning were that God bringeth men into deserts and wafts, as he did *Israel* his people fourty years together. *To wander in a wilderness* is a proverbial speech, and implies these two things.

1. He is said to wander in a wilderness, who is ignorant of his way, or knoweth not how to direct and make his course, we say, *The man's in a Wood*, when we perceive one intangled in speech or action. Hence

2. To wander in a wilderness, notes improbability, yea extreamest difficulty of attaining our end. A man that is in a wide vast wilderness, gives himself for lost, every step may be backward as well as forward: As he knows not where he goes, so he knows not

whether he goes: He is in a Wilderness, who knoweth not his way, or despaireth of his end.

אִנְיָוּת Inanitas
vacuitas, confu-
sio, res informis,
errare eos facit
in invio vel
inani ubi nullus
sit difficulta-
tum exitus.
Pined.
Mente destituti
vias & ratio-
nes ineunt in-
commatas &
perniciosas.

The Original word is *Tobu*. Moses hath it to express the Chaos, Gen. 1. 1. *The earth was without form and void*: Before God planted the world, all the world was a Wilderness, a place without form, it had no method in it: Creation methodiz'd that rude heap, and drew the Wilderness into a Garden. A Wilderness notes any state or condition without shape or order: and those men wander in a Wilderness, who wanting the true leadings of humane reason, and a divine rule, run dangerous and pernicious ways, both to themselves and others: He that goes in such ways, goes out of his way, yea (as the next clause of the verse speaks) he goes without all ways. *They wander in a Wilderness*

Where there is no way.

אִתֵּר Iter, via
quæ calcatur
pedibus per me-
taphoram cur-
sus vel institu-
tam vivendi.

The way is to be understood as the Wilderness, *metaphorically*: The word signifieth, not only a way which we tread with our feet, but the way which we tread with our actions: A right course of life is the way of man. These (through the judgement of God) *Wander in a Wilderness where there is no way*; that is, *no plain, no right, no beaten way*, unless beaten by the Sons of *Belial*, or by the Travellers to the land of trouble and darkness. When God takes away the hearts of men, they run strange courses, and go ways which wise men never went, the foot of honesty or of justice, treads not their paths. They who go in such ways, *Go in a Wilderness where there is no way.*

Observe from this effect,

First, *That the very mistakes and errors of men are from God.*

1. Spiritual mistakes, or mistakes in spiritual things (Isa. 63. 17.) *O Lord, why hast thou made us to erre from thy ways* (so the Church cryeth out) *and hardened our heart from thy fear*? God made them to erre when he did not effectually shew them the truth; he hardened their hearts when he did not soften them. God left them a while to the conduct of their own lusts, because they had long refused the conduct of his Spirit. They *vexed his Spirit* (vers. 11.) and therefore he gave them up to their own spirits (Psal 81. 12.) *All the motions of man are aberrations, when he moves without, or against the counsel of God.*

2. Mistakes

2. Mistakes in civil things (which is the business of this Text) are from God too. God took away the heart of Rehoboam, and then rejecting good counsel, *He wandered in a Wilderness where there was no way.* Wherefore the King hearkened not unto the people, for the cause was from the Lord, that he might perform his saying, 1 King. 12. 15. The Lord left Rehoboam to the pride of his heart, and to the blindness of his mind, and then he ran into that extreme mistake, which lost him ten parts of his Kingdom.

Secondly, From the Connexion. *He taketh away the heart of the chief of the earth, and what followeth? They wander in a Wilderness where there is no way.*

Observe, *When the heart is disordered, the whole man is disordered.*

Put the heart out of frame, and all is out of frame: **The heart is the prime mover in man, whether it be to do good or to do evil. Therefore the work of Conversion beginneth at the heart, or is the giving of a new heart:** God doth not give a new hand, or a new eye, a new tongue or a new foot, but a new heart, because he knows that if once the heart be new, the whole man will be renewed. If the heart be settled, all is settled: *His heart is fixed* (saith the Psalmist) *and he shall not be afraid.* The heart runs before the foot stirs, either into the ways of sin, or from the approach of danger. The heart is Pilot and guide (under God) of mans life and way. Where God takes away the heart he never staies himself, and he that hath not a heart within him, nor God near him, may do any thing rather than what he ought, or go any whether, rather than where he should. *He that is deserted of God intangles himself at every step, he is in a Wilderness, and the further he goes, the more he is out of his way.* As it was with Pharaoh, God took away his heart, he would not hear the counsel that was given him to let the people go, and then he wilder'd himself from day to day, till he was utterly ruined, every step he took was out of the way of his own safety and honour.

Thirdly Observe,

They that will not take Gods ways, shall be carried where there is no way.

God sheweth man his way, Go here (saith God) it is a way of Holiness; go there, it is the way of justice, come hither, this

*Deus requirit
ut finamus nos
ab illo duci
quamvis vide-
amur per invi-
um duci. Dum
enim ille dux
nostri itineris
fuerit nostros
pedes diriget
quamvis nos
via rationem
non teneamus.
Pined.*

*Via fidei est ob-
scura non aper-
ta & clara
visionis.*

is the way of truth: Thus God beckons and envites men into his way. If we say, no, but we will walk in our own ways, then God resolves, seeing you love to go out of my way, you shall go in a wilderness where there is no way; you shall meet with Bushes, Thorns and Briers to scratch and vex you; yea, you shall meet with wilde beasts, with Scorpions and Serpents, to sting and devour you. God meeteth those that rejoyce and work righteousness, even those that remember him in his ways (*Isa. 64. 5.*) But Bushes and Briers, Serpents and Scorpions shall meet those who turn from the ways of God, even those who rejoyce and work unrighteousness. These run into danger, as fast as they run into sin. *There's no safety out of Gods way, many have died in Gods way, but no man ever perished in it.* It is said of *Abraham* (*Heb. 11. 8.*) *That he went out he knew not whither.* The Saints go at Gods call where there is no way, that is, no way known to them, but yet they are assured there is a way cut out and measured for them, by the wisdom of God; *Abraham* was sure of a good way, and of a good end, yet he went he knew not whether. *Abraham* knew he had God for his guide, though he knew not a step of the way he was to goe. **It becometh us to follow God blindfold; blinde obedience (in that sense) is good, but due to none but God.** Faith bids us to do that, for which we can give no reason but this, we are commanded to do it. So some expound that of *David* (*Psal. 119. 104.*) *Thy word is a Lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path;* he doth not say, the word was a light unto his eyes, but a light unto his feet; the word is a light to the eyes, that is, it shineth to the understanding; yet the word is sometimes a light unto our feet, when it is not a light unto our eyes, that is, God will have us go where we cannot see our way. Answerable to that of the Apostle (*2 Cor. 5. 7.*) *We walk by Faith and not by sight;* Faith hath a light for its feet, but not to its eyes. **Full vision swallows up Faith in Heaven;** And the more vision we have on earth, the less we act by Faith. **Believers have not a clear sight, but they have a sure guide.** Wicked men would be thought to see much, but their sight leads them out of the true way, or into the wilderness where there is no way, but that of sin, nor end, but that of sorrow. Here is the first effect of Gods taking away the heart of the chief of the earth, *they wander in a Wilderness where there is no way.* We have two other effects, vers. 25.

Verse

Vers. 25. *They grope in the dark without light, and they stagger like a drunken man.*

They grope in the dark without light.

The word signifies to find out or prove our way by feeling, this we call groping. In the dark, hands or staves are to us in stead of eyes. A blind man though he be in the open Sun, yet he gropes for his way, for he wants the light of his eyes: a man who hath the light of his eyes, yet wanting the light of the air, and being in outward darkness, even he must grope his way (*Job 5. 14. Eliphaz describing the judgment of God upon the men of the world, saith; They meet with darkness in the day time, and grope in the noon day as in the night, that is, in things that are clear and evident they are puzzled, and know not which way to turn themselves, when the way lies strait and is without turnings. It is a great judgment of God, when in busineses that are as clear as day, men stand beating their brains, and troubling themselves, as if they were in the dark. It is very ill to want light, but it is worse to have light and not to use it. These grope in the dark without light.*

Palpavit tetigit, tangenda exploravit.

Descriptio hominis cujus mutatum est cor, & mens aut recepta aut contrita aut turbata vehementer. Sanct.

There is a twofold darkness; First, Natural, that is not here meant. Secondly, Metaphorical; and that is of two sorts. First, The darkness of ignorance. Secondly, The darkness of trouble or of affliction. We may understand the text, of darkness in either of the two latter senses, *They grope in the dark*, that is, in the darkness of ignorance: or, in the darkness of trouble. Rather joyn both together, they are in trouble, and they are ignorant, not knowing which way to get out, and clear their way.

But why doth he say, *They grope in the dark without light.*

Light and darkness are contrary, what agreement is there (saith the Apostle) between light and darkness? Though there be no agreement between light and darkness, yet sometimes there is a mixture of light and darkness; some darkness hath some light in it: That's it we call twilight, the dusk of the evening or of the morning, there is a time when it is not perfectly dark, yet the light is gone, the Sun is down. Such a day is described in the book of Zechary, *A day which shall be neither dark nor light, but it shall be between both.* In it is mercy, that when we have not a clear light, yet to have some glimmering, or appearance:

appearance of light. The judgment here is, *They shall grope in the dark without light*, that is, they shall have pure darkness.

The Hebrew is yet somewhat more emphatical, *They feel darkness and not light*. Repetitions with a negative are frequent in Scripture, to shew a vehement negation (*Amos 5. 18.*) *The day of the Lord is darkness and not light*. *Isa. 38. 1.* A message was carried to Hezekiah; *Thou shalt die and not live*, that is, thou shalt surely die. *Job. 1.* *He confessed and denied not*, that is, he confessed strongly or peremptorily. So here, *They feel darkness and not light*, that is, they feel extream darkness, or the extremity of darkness, the greatest imaginable.

Hebraei usitatum est dum veni & pondus afferre volunt sententia affirmativa, addunt contrarij negationem. In tenebris & non in luce, i.e. in tenebris omnis lucis expertibus.

Two things I shall observe from this (taking the passage as an expression of the judgement of God upon a sinful people.)

First, *They who abuse light shall be deprived of light.*

He taketh away the heart, then they wander, and then they grope in darkness without light. They had light, yet acted like men in the dark, or like blind men: they walked in darkness when they had light. Hence God pronounceth against them, *You shall grope in darkness and have no light*: God threatned his ancient people the Jews with this dreadful plague (*Deut. 28. 28, 29.*) *I will smite thee with madness and blindness and astonishment of heart, and thou shalt grope at noon dayes, as the blind gropeth in darkness, and thou shalt not prosper in thy ways.* *Light is the gift of God, he giveth, and he taketh it away.* As when he created the world, there was nothing but darkness, and he said, *Let there be light and there was light*, so he saith now to persons, yea to Nations, who are in light, and have abused the light, the light of the Gospel or the light of outward prosperity, *Let there be darkness upon them*, and it is so. He can make light without darkness, and darkness without light. Take heed of sinning against light, lest ye grope in the dark without light. *Those sins leave the Soul, yea the whole man in greatest darkness, which are committed in or against the greatest light.*

Secondly Observe,

That persons forsaken of God, and covered over with darkness, are useless and unfit for any thing.

He that is in the dark cannot act. *Prov. 4. 19.* *The way of the wicked is as darkness, they know not at what they stumble; they who*

who knows not at what they ſtumble, know not where they go. A blind man fears in a plain way, and goes ſometimes confidently where there is greateſt danger : Wicked men are blind, they know not whether they go, nor what they do. He that knows not what he doth, may too late know what he hath done, and he that knows not whether he goes, may know too late whether he is gone; having ſtumbled often, he falls at laſt into that pit of darkneſs, from whence he ſhall never ſee nor find his way out. Remember the Counſel of Chriſt (*Joh. 12. 35.*) *Walk while you have the light, leſt darkneſs come upon you, for he that walketh in darkneſs knoweth not whether he goeth :* They who know not where they go, know not whither they go; If our way be hidden from us, ſo alſo is our end. This is the ſecond effect which follows the taking away of the heart. *They grope in darkneſs without light.*

The third effect is,

He maketh them to ſagger like a Drunken man.

They who are overcome with wine or ſtrong drink are unable, not only to manage buſineſſes, but to order themſelves. *Drunkneſs is the diſturbance of the brain, and the overthrow of our ſenſes. Drunkenneſs maketh a ſtorm in the tongue, and a tempeſt all the body over. Drunkenneſs drowneth reaſon, and maketh ſhipwrack of chaſtity.* There is a mental, as well as a corporal drunkenneſs : A dry drunkenneſs as well as a wet drunkenneſs. Sober, grave, diſcreet and prudent men, who by their wiſdom and judgement have overcome all oppoſitions, and carryed all before them, even theſe ſhall ſagger and reel too and fro, not knowing where they are, or upon what ground they ſtand.

*Ebrietas eſt
turbatio capitis,
ſubverſio ſen-
ſus, tempeſtas
lingua, procella
corpo- is, nau-
fragium caſti-
tatis, infania
voluntatis.
Aug.*

The wrath of God taketh away the reaſon of man. The Drunkards reaſon is ſuſpended: we ſay commonly, *they are beaſts*, and we call drunkenneſs a beaſtly ſin, becauſe ſuch act more like beaſts than men. *I* (ſaith the good Prophet, *Jer. 23. 9.*) *am like a drunken man, becauſe of the Lord, and becauſe of the words of his holineſs :* That is, I do even ſagger and reel, I am as a man aſtoniſhed and ſenceleſs at the apprehenſion of Gods diſpleaſure, and becauſe of that cup of his fierce indignation, which his holy word threatens againſt an unholy people. The prophet was as a drunken man, while he foreſaw a cup in the hand of God, the

the wine whereof was red with wrath; how drunken then were they who were made to drink it, dreggs and all to the very bottom? Of such *Isaiah* speaketh (*chap. 29. 9.*) *They are drunken, but not with wine, they stagger, but not with strong drink: For the Lord hath poured upon you the spirit of deep sleep.* Men sin greatly against God, when they are drunken with wine, and God punisheth man greatly, when he makes him drunken without wine: when he takes away the heart, and leaves sober men to act and personate the drunkard.

To clear which, I shall shew you a seven-fold parallel between a man who hath too much drink in him, and no heart in him, God having taken away his heart.

First, They who are drunken, think every thing moves and reels; the very earth seems to totter under them, and the whole world to turn about them. Whereas indeed, 'tis only their heads that turn, and themselves that reel. 'Tis so with many great Politicians and Chiefs of the people: God in judgement taketh away their hearts, and then (to their apprehension) every thing turns. They fearfully suppose sometimes that all turns against them, and sometimes flatteringly, that all turns for them. This giddiness of their heads, must needs produce giddy counsels, and unsettle all they set themselves unto. God took away the heart of *Cain*, and then in this sense also, as well as in the letter, he dwelt in the land of *Nod*, that is, in a trembling moving land: yea, *Cain* thought every mans hand was turned against him to slay him, as soon as God was turned from him, *Gen. 4. 14.* *Pharaoh's* suspicious head forecast great dangers to himself from a people, who intended him no harm. These *Israelites* (saith he) will surely turn from me, and joyn with my enemies: this unjust and groundless fear, put him upon such counsels as proved the just ground of his own overthrow.

Secondly, Drunkenness makes the object appear double or crooked to the eye. For as he that looks upon objects through the water that is without him, so he that looks upon them through the watery liquor that is within him, sees that which is strait, as if it were crooked, and that which is single doubles in his sight. Thus when the Lord poureth a spirit of penal drunkenness upon the wisest in the world, the straitest and justest actings of righteous men are judged crooked and indirect; what they do with greatest simplicity and plainness, is counted doubling, yea.

yea, juggling with God and man. Christ himself was called a deceiver by such a generation. And *Paul* speaks of himself, and his fellow Apostles, we are, *as deceivers, yet true*. And as the actions of others, so their own dangers and enemies seem double, yea treble and twenty fold, to what indeed they are. Troubled imaginations are a distorting and multiplying glass, to every work, thing or person they look upon.

Thirdly, Drunkenness dimms the bodily eye: the mental eye of these men is so dimmed that they cannot discern between right and wrong, between good and evil. They put *light for darkness, and darkness for light, bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter*. Their minds are blinded, and their understandings as much disabled from knowing what is just, as their wills and affections are from chusing and embracing it. The Prophet (*Isa. 28. 7.*) reproving drunkenness in the letter, saith, *They have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way; the Priest and the Prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong drink, they erre in vision, they stumble in judgement*. Now as men that are corporally drunk, wear out their wits, drown their brains, weaken their judgements, and when they are actually drunk, are not able to make any judgement at all; such dotards do they proceed, who are intoxicated with the wine of divine revenges. The Prophet describes them fully (*Isa. 19. 14.*) *The Lord hath mingled a perverse spirit in the midst thereof, and they have caused Egypt to erre in every work thereof, as a drunken man staggereth in his vomit*. They who erre in every work, must needs draw them into errour, who work by their direction. If the blind lead the blind, both fall into the ditch. They who have lost their own eyes, will make but ill guides for others.

Fourthly, A drunken man defiles and pollutes himself with his own vomit, he pours that out loathsomely, which he poured in delightfully. Thus also men left of God, defile whatsoever they put their hands or tongues unto. They continually vomit up the filthiness of their hearts, the pride, the cruelty, the injustice, the baseness of their spirits, in all they speak or act: Their best counsels are like *shameful spewing upon all their glory*, as the Prophet speaks, (*Hab. 2. 16.*) *their stink and their ill savour goeth up when they do great things* (*Joel 2. 20.*) And the greater the things are which they do, the greater is the stink that goeth up.

Their own dung or vomit, is of a better savour then their designs and workings are. Plain-hearted *Jacob* was afraid that the fraudulent and cruel dealings of his two sons, *Simeon* and *Levi*, would make him *stink among the inhabitants of the Land* (*Gen. 34. 30.*) Cruelty and treachery are odious, both in the sight of God and man, good and bad; they are so in the sight of the good, whosoever commits them, and they are so in the sight of the bad, if any commit them but themselves.

Fifthly, Drunkenness doth not only empy men of reason, but filleth them with passion, it makes them mad and furious: We say of some, they are *mad-drunk*. This effect of drunkenness is often visible in the counsels and waies of men deserted and dishearted by God: they become raging mad, they like *Jehu*, *drive furiously*, they fume and fume, they make all both weary and ashamed of their company. *Why do the Heathen rage* (saith the Psalmist) *and the people imagine a vain thing?* 'Tis a fit of this drunkenness that makes them so. The inhabitants of the earth being drunk with the mystical wine of Babylonish whorish Fornication, rage against Christ and his laws: yea, then *they are full of the fury of the Lord, lying like a wilde bull in a net at the head of every street*, *Isa. 51. 10.*

Sixthly, The text tels us that drunkenness makes men stagger, they cannot keep their feet, nor stand their ground. Such a judgement God sendeth upon wicked men: their minds are full of irresolutions, they are not able to stand to their own purposes and promises: they stagger from this part to that, from this side to that: They change interests as fast as there is any change in affairs or outward accidents. Now they are for the truth, and presently they oppose the truth. They are like the *double minded man*, of whom the Apostle *James* speaks, *unstable in all their waies*.

Lastly, Drunken men often run upon their own ruine. We have a saying, *that drunkards seldome take hurt*, the meaning is, they are not sensible of the hurt they take; they indeed take hurt oftner then any men, and run desperately upon their own death. Thus men left of God run courses as unsafe, as they are unjust: and while they make too much hast to save, destroy themselves. They rush like *Balaam* upon the swords point, and while they are most afraid of trouble, no advice, scarce any force of friends can keep them off from it. They will stagger till they

fall, and fall so, that they can never rise again. We may find many parallels of it abroad, and among our selves not a few. Do we not see men groping in the dark without light, wandering in the wilderness where there is no way, staggering like drunken men? It were easier to give particular examples of these three effects in all ages and histories of the world: But I shall conclude with three general instances held out in Scripture.

The First is that of the Apostle concerning the Gentiles (*Rom. 1. 21.*) *They knew God (they had light) but they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened: they obscured the light which God gave them in the creature, or benighted themselves in the day time of natural light: And what followed? Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools. They wandered in the wilderness of their own lusts and vile affections, where there was no way; They groped in the darkness of a reprobate minde, without light. They staggerd like a drunken man, from one evil to another, being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity, whisperers, &c.*

Secondly, We read another parallel in the whole Nation of the Jews (*Rom. 11. 8, 9, 10.*) *God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear unto this day; that is, in the stile of Job, he hath taken away their hearts; and have not the Jews wandered ever since in a wilderness where there is no way? have they not groped in darkness without light?*

Thirdly, Take the instance of all *Apostate Christians*, according to that grand Prophecie of the Apostle (*2 Thes. 11. 12.*) *They had the light of truth shining to them, but did not receive the love of it. For this cause God shall send them strong delusions that they should believe a lye, they should be seduced and led into a wilderness of error, they should grope in the dark without light, and stagger from one lye to another, from one false way to another, like a drunken man, till they fell into that bottomless pit of destruction, as the Apostle shuts up that dreadful Prophecie (verse 12.) That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.* God takes away the heart of the chief of the people of the earth, in reference to civil things, he also takes away the heart of the people of the earth.

earth in reference to spiritual things; wandering, groping, tottering are the effects of both. When God doth the former, Kingdoms wander, grope and totter, when God doth the latter Churches do so: By the former the outward glory and beauty of mankind decayeth, and their inward by the latter. Churches and Kingdoms, the bodies and souls of men, decay, die and perish for ever, when God taketh away their hearts. And when he in justice doth this (as when he doth it, he alwaies doth) then he declares (which is *Jobs* scope in this whole discourse) that *with him is wisdom and strength, and that he also hath counsel and understanding.* And lest any should think that *Job* had all this while told stories, and spoken at random, he assures us in the next words, that he had spoken only what his own experiences and observations gave testimony unto: *Loe mine eye hath seen all this, &c.*

JOB.



JOB Chap. 13. Vers. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Loe, mine eye hath seen all this, mine ear hath heard and understood it.

What ye know, the same do I know also, I am not inferior to you.

Surely I would speak to the Almighty, and I desire to reason with God.

But ye are forgers of lies, ye are all Physicians of no value.



T*He friends of Job charged him with ignorance of God, and of his waies: To refute which, he made that excellent confession both of the power and wisdom of God in the Chapter foregoing, and concludeth his discourse upon those points, at the beginning of this, with an attestation to all, from his own knowledg and experience. Some joyn the two first verses of this 13th, to the last of the 12th Chapter, beginning this at the 3d. verse. And they who consent to their standing as a part of the 13th Chapter, yet interpret them as a transition or passage to the matter here further discussed & enlarged.*

*Caput malim
ordiri a ver. 30
sed transitio
est. Merc.*

Loe, mine eye hath seen all this, mine ear hath heard and understood it.

As if he had said, To assure you that all is true which I have spoken and asserted, mine own eyes and ears are witnesses. We may give you the summe of his reasoning thus.

That which I have clearly seen, that which I have received from good hands, and from approved Authors, that which I have fully understood to be, is a truth.

But the whole matter which I have declared in the former Chapter, is such, as mine eye hath seen, mine ear hath heard, and my understanding hath fully apprehended.

There-

Therefore thoſe things are true, and ought to be received by you as truths.

Loe, mine eye hath ſeen all this, &c.

*Triplex cogni-
tio, 1. ocularum
per experienci-
am, 2. auris per
traditionem,
3. intellectus
per diſcuſum.*

Here is a threefold knowledge laid down in this verſe :

1. Knowledge by experience, *Loe, mine eye hath ſeen.*
2. Knowledge by tradition, or by teaching, *Mine ear hath heard.*
3. Knowledge by diſcourſe, *Mine ear hath heard and under-
ſtood it, that is, I have underſtood what I have ſeen and heard.*

Loe, mine eye hath ſeen.

*In oculis mens
& ratio inte-
ligitur, qua, qua
cognovimus vi-
diſſe dicimur.
Sanct.*

The eye is taken in Scripture two waies.

1. Figuratively, So it is put for the underſtanding, becauſe as the eye is the light of the body; ſo the underſtanding is the light of the mind. An ignorant man is a blind man, how clear ſighted ſoever the eye of his body is (*Deut. 29 4.*) *The Lord hath not given you an heart to perceive, and eyes to ſee, and ears to hear unto this day.* Here are three faculties, and three acts: 1. *The heart to perceive,* 2. *The eye to ſee,* 3. *The ear to hear.* The heart is ſometimes put for the whole inward man, and then the eye and the ear are taken properly for the organs of the outward man: but we cannot interpret *Moses* ſo, for though the Lord had not given them an heart to perceive, yet they had bodily eyes to ſee, and ears to hear, they were neither deaf nor blind ſenſitively: ſo then, the two latter expreſſions import no more then the firſt; he hath not given you eyes to ſee, he hath not given you ears to hear, that is, you are utterly ſhut up in blindneſs and ignorance, or you have not hearts to perceive (*Luk. 24. 31.*) *Their eyes were opened and they knew him.* They ſaw before, but they did not ſee diſcerningly, or with the light of their underſtandings. The buſineſs of the Goſpel is to open the eye, to turn from darkneſs to light, and from the power of Satan unto God (*Act. 26. 18.*) That is, to convince the underſtanding, that, a ſtate of ſin is a ſtate of darkneſs, and that the grace and favour of God to ſinners is light, that, to be under the power of ſin is to be under the power of Satan, and that it is both our duty and our happineſs to turn to God. To ſee theſe things, and theſe our underſtandings only can ſee, is to have our eyes opened.

Some underſtand the text in *Job*, of the eye, in this tropical ſenſe,

sense, and then it is coincident with the latter clause, the eye is the understanding. But rather take it literally, for the corporal eye, and so the eye importeth experience and observation, which come in, or are entertained at the eye.

Mine ear hath heard.

The ear is the sense of Discipline, knowledge enters at this pore, when that of the eye is shut up either by a defect in nature, or by accident. They who are born blind, may be bred great Scholars, the ear can let in learning enough without the assistance of the eye. Hearing is a nearer servant to the understanding then seeing is.

Mine ear hath heard] *The ear hears, either by instruction from man, or by Revelation from God, of which Eliphaz spake (Chap. 4. 12.) Now a thing was secretly brought to me, and mine ear received a little thereof.* Here I conceive Job intends the former, having learned what he here avouches, from men learned and knowing in the ways of God.

Further, We may take both sight and hearing more largely, and then the whole is no more but a vehement affirmation, that Job did fully understand what himself had affirmed, as also what his friends had so largely argued. As if he had said, *I very well perceive what ye (my friends) have said, and indeed they are not new to me, experience hath taught me them before, and I have heard of them often, they are the received principles of wise and godly men, even such as I have seen, heard and understood, before ever I convers'd or changed a word with you.* And so these three expressions, I have seen, heard and understood, are but an amplification of the same thing, either implying that he understood them as clearly, as if his eye had seen them, or that which way soever any mans understanding can be helpt, his had, even by the ear and by the eye, both which had contributed their best furtherance, to furnish him with those notions. *Loe, mine eye hath seen, &c.*

Vidi, audivi, intellexi, assentationem continent & amplificationem rei bene perspecta ac si eadem res per eandem vocem & synonymiam repetitur. Bold.

Hence Observe.

First, That our senses are inlets to the understanding.

Job placeth the understanding last, *Mine eye hath seen all this, and mine ear hath heard and understood it, or understood it by the service of mine eye and of mine ear.* The senses of the body are advantages to the mind: the eye doth not see for it self, or

for the body only, but the eye ſees for the underſtanding : The ear doth not hear for it ſelf, or for the body only, but the ear heareth for the underſtanding. The right uſe and diligent improvement of ſenſe, improves us, both in knowledge and in holineſs. While we look with the eye upon what God doth, while we attend with the ear what God ſpeaks, we learn who God is, and what we muſt be. As the eye and the ear are ſervants to ſin, ſo they are ſervants to grace : they are always ſervants to ſin in wicked men, and ſometimes they prove ſo in good men : An eye not watched takes in vain objects : *Thine eye (ſaith Solomon) ſhall behold the ſtrange woman, and thine heart ſhall utter perverſe things ;* the eye carrieth the meſſage to the heart, and preſently corrupts the ſpirit with the object which it beholds, if the object be corrupt. Hence the counſel of Solomon (*Prov. 23. 31.*) *Look not upon the Wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the Cup : Look not upon the Wine,* Why not ? Will the colour hurt us ? yes, The colour of the Wine will ſtain the eye, and the eye will ſtain the heart. As ſad objects go quickly from the eye to the heart (*mine eye affecteth mine heart, Lam. 3. 51.* ſo do luſtful and vain objects ; they being taken in at the eye, do both affect and infect the heart in a moment. Let not theſe ſenſes which the Lord hath given us for natural uſes, to the body, and for ſpiritual uſes, to the Soul ; let not theſe (I ſay) be abuſed or turned to the diſſervice of the body (much leſſe) to the deſtruction and damnation of the Soul.

Secondly, *Job* having ſpoken with much plainneſs and confidence in the former Chapter about the diſpenſations of God, clears it here, that he had not ſpoken by rote, or without book, or tumbled out what he could not prove ; No (ſaith he) mine eye hath ſeen all this, mine ear hath heard and underſtood it.

Note from it,

It becometh us to be well aſſured our ſelves of what we teach unto others.

He that inſtructeth another ſhould firſt be inſtructed himſelf, and ſhould have, not only a ſound of words at his tongue, but ſound knowledge at his heart. As it is the duty of him that inſtructeth others, to practice what he ſpeaks, ſo to be well aſſured of what he ſpeaks : as his life ſhould hold forth a pattern of that doctrine which he delivereth, ſo his underſtanding ſhould hold the model of that doctrine which he delivereth : Thou that
teacheſt

teachest another, art not thou taught thy self? 'Tis sinful not to do what we teach, or to teach what we do not know. *A good man will advise no more than he will do, and a wise man will say no more than he understands.* Job was much assured that he knew what he taught his friends, when he affirms in the next verse, that he knew as much as any of his friends.

Vers. 2. *What ye know, the same do I know also, I am not inferior to you.*

The Hebrew is, *According to your know or knowledge, is my knowledge, I am not below you in knowledge; Take knowledge in the matter, or in the measure, I am not inferior to you.* I know the same things which ye know, I have extended my knowledge to as many particulars as you, and I know every particular as fully, and am as clear in it as your selves.

Secundum scire vel scientiam vestram & ego novi.

But doth not Job play the boaster? Doth not pride put forth its head at his tongue, while he speaks such language as this?

Job spake this sense and almost the same language at the third verse of the twelfth Chapter, where he saith, *I have understanding as well as you, I am not inferior to you, yea, who knoweth not such things as these?* Thither I refer the Reader for the meaning of this seeming, unbecoming, boast. I shall here only answer in general, that Job speaks not this ambitiously or arrogantly as they do, who love to live in the sound of their own commendations, who if others commend them not, will not fail to commend themselves: *What know ye that I know not?* Neither doth he speak this in contempt of his friends, as if he slighted or undervalued them: Job knew it to be, not only uncivil, but sinful to trample upon the reputations of his friends: to speak high words of himself, and basely of other men. Job speaks this, not because he delighted in it, but because he was necessitated to it. The Apostles Apology may be his (2 Cor. 11. 5) *I suppose I was not a whit behind the very chiefest Apostles (here Paul speaks in as bragging language as Job doth) but I am become a fool in glorying: 'Tis folly to do so, yet he hath enough to vindicate his own wisdom, while he spake like a fool? even this, You have compelled me.* If any should say Job became a fool in glorying, he had the same to say of his friends, which Paul had of the Corinthians, *You have compelled me, you have put me upon it, I could not avoid it; while you have*

Non dicit hac arroganter & ambitiose, sed summa necessitate impulsus. Pined.

laid me low, and ranked me, not only among ignorant men, but even among the beasts, was I not forced to stand up for my self, and tell you plainly, that I knew as much as you, and that *I am not inferiour unto you*? Some in contempt of their teachers, are ready to say, what need we hear Sermons, we know as much as the Preacher can tell us? Job was not unwilling to hear the counsel of his servant, much less did he contemn the counsel of his friends. So then, These words are a necessitated vindication of himself, he could not so forsake his own honour and reputation, as to let it lie in the dust for fear he should seem proud in speaking for it. Though all ambitious contending with others, is odious, yet no man ought to betray the truth, or his own integrity, lest he should be counted contentious. He buyes the opinion of an humble and of a peaceable man too dear, who either pays the Faith of God for it, or his own credit.

Vers. 3. *Surely I would speak to the Almighty, and I desire to reason with God.*

וַיֹּאמֶר Non
solum est par-
ticula assertiva
sed illativa
causam red-
dens.

The word which we translate [*Surely*] is not only a particle of assertion, but of illation, rendering a reason of what was said before. Some render it here, not *Surely*, but, *Therefore I would speak to the Almighty*; as if he had said, I am assured that God is good and just, and I have found men harsh and unequal to me, *Therefore I will speak to the Almighty*.

Profecto ego
pro omnipo-
tente loquar
& disceptare
pro Deo forti
velo. Inn.

There is also a different translation of the whole verse, thus *Surely I would speak for the Almighty, and I would reason for God*. And so he confutes the suspicion of his friends concerning him, and their confidence of themselves, as if he had darkened the glory of God, and they only were the assertors of it, as if he had opposed God, and they only had stood up to defend and maintain his cause. *You think that you only have spoken on Gods side, and that I have spoken either to his disservice or of my self, but indeed, I would speak for God, I desire to maintain the justice, honour, holiness, mercy and goodness of God as much as any of you all, and I would as readily engage for him, as you or any man else, I would speak for the Almighty, and I would plead for God*. We cannot have a better cause to plead than Gods, nor can any give us a better Fee. It is our duty to be Advocates for God, though we have nothing for our pains; how much more, when all that we have already, we have

have from him, and what ever we ſpeak or do for God and his cauſe, ſhall ſurely be remembred; God keepeth a book of remembrance of what the Saints ſpeak one to another, concerning their own caſes or troubles: then much more doth he keep a book of remembrance, when (according to this tranſlation) they ſpeak for the Almighty, and plead for God.

But the ſenſe runs more generally with our tranſlation, *I would ſpeak to the Almighty, and I deſire to reaſon with God.* And then the meaning is, as if Job had ſaid, *I ſee I ſhall avail or profit my ſelf but little by any further conference with you, therefore I deſire to turn my ſelf to God, from whom I am ſure of a good answer.*

Again, Job ſeemeth to comply with what Zophar had ſpoken (Chap. 11. 5.) *O that God would ſpeak, and open his lips againſt thee!* Job accepts his wiſh, *You have ſaid, O that God would ſpeak, I deſire no other, I alſo would ſpeak to the Almighty, I would reaſon with God, what in your account would be my puniſhment, I ſhould receive as a great happineſs; yea I make it my request that I may ſpeak with the Almighty, and that I might reaſon with God.* Thus he declareth the confidence he had in the goodneſs of his cauſe, as alſo the clearneſs of his conſcience, both which were ſuch as did not fear, no not the preſence of God himſelf.

And I deſire to reaſon with God.

This part of the verſe is of the ſame intendment with the former. The word ſignifies to reaſon by way of formal diſpute, where arguments or mediums are held out, upon which we conclude the truth of our opinion or poſition. The Jews call Logick by this name.

The Septuagint do ſomewhat allay and modifye the words, ſuppoſing Job too bold and free in this offer, therefore they add, *I would reaſon with God, if he pleaſe to give me leave, or if he will accept of me in it:* The ſupplement is pious, and is to be underſtood in all expreſſions of this nature. What any man at any time deſires of God, he muſt do it with ſubmiſſion to the will of God, unleſs God hath already declared his will concerning that deſire.

יָכֹחַ *Est ratio-*
ne & a guber-
tis utra utraq;
habitis verita-
tem inquirere.
Dialectica He-
brais dicitur
הַכֹּחַ
הַיָּכֹחַ
ars arguendi,
quod ἐξέγχεῖν
Græci dicunt.
Septuaginta
addunt, Si vo-
luerit, pie &
urbanè; q.d. si
illi accepta fu-
rit hæc mea di-
ſputandi & lo-
quendi volun-
tas. D. uſ.

But suppose God should have hearkened to *Job*, and granted him this request, could *Job* make any improvement of it? Is it possible for dust and ashes, for flesh and blood to prosper in a contention with the Almighty, or to reason the cause with God, and carry it? Yea, is it possible for man to speak at all with the Almighty, or to reason with God?

I answer, *Job* speaks thus, not as if he thought that God and he could personally, or as we say, hand to hand speak together, and reason out the case. 'Tis true, God sometimes hath spoken with man; but then it was in a humane shape (*Gen. 18. &c.*) And when it is said that he spake with *Moses* face to face, as a man speaketh to his friend, *Exod. 33. 11.* yet *Moses* did not, nor indeed could he, see the face of God (*ver. 20.*) God manifested himself familiarly and plainly to him, this was speaking face to face. So, all that *Job* desires, is but a liberty to open his mind freely to God, and to receive answer from God in what way he should appoint. As if he had said, *I had rather speak with God himself, than with you my friends, and I doubt not but I shall find at last a more favourable hearing from him, than I have yet had from you.*

*Non ipsius accusandi sed criminatio-
nis vestra refellendi
gratia, causam
meam apud ejus
tribunal agere
disidero: non ut
ejus judicia dis-
putare velim,
sed ut vestros
errores destru-
erem. Aquin.*

Again, *Job* doth not desire to reason or speak with God as an adversary, but as a Judge: He had no controversie with God, but he applies himself to God for the determining and ending of the controversie which he had with his friends.

Lastly, *Job* did not suspect that there was any the least error in the proceedings of God with him, but his hope was to make it appear, even before the tribunal of God (if he could be admitted thither) that his friends had erred in their proceedings with him, and opinion of him.

Hence Observe,

First, *That man naturally seeks refuge, when he finds himself oppressed.*

Job found himself oppressed upon earth, therefore he hath recourse to heaven. This Text is *Jobs* appeal. When the Apostle *Paul* found himself overborn by the clamours of the Jews, he saith, *I appeal unto Caesar*: We, in such a condition, may appeal to Christ. When we are pinched by men, Faith turns to God. And, that is one of the advantages which the Saints gain by their hard usage in the world, and the troubles of this life; they converse more with, and draw nearer unto God, who is the com-
fort

fort of our lives. We are never happy in our diſtances from God, and when we are near him, nothing can make us unhappy.

There are three things in God, which may encourage us to communicate our condition, and ſpread our cauſe before him.

Fiſt, The clearneſs of his underſtanding : He knoweth all things and perſons, and he kneweth them intallibly. 'Tis a miſery to be bound to the award of blind Judges, or of thoſe who will not ſee. There is no ignorance at all in God, neither can any thing pervert his knowledge. That which deterrs Hypocrites, invites the ſincere into the preſence of God, *his omniſcience*. They can daub up their matters with men, but God looks through all their Morter, and ſearcheth that which they would not have ſeen at all, *the heart*. *Our hearts are as open to him as our faces are, and our thoughts as conſpicuous as our actions*. Now (I ſay) that which diſcourageth Hypocrites, encourages the upright in heart, though they have many ſins and corruptions about them, yet they know God knoweth that their corruptions are a burden to them, and their ſins their ſorrow : They know, he knows alſo the integrity of their hearts, and the ſtate of their cauſe. God is ſuch a Judge as needeth none to inform him, neither can any by miſinformations, miſlead his judgment.

Secondly, As God knows the right ſtate of our cauſe, and of our hearts, ſo he will do us right, he cannot be deceived, neither will he deceive; he rewarded every man according to his works. And as he commands his Miniſters, *To ſay unto the righteous, it ſhall be well with him, ſo he will ſay nothing but well unto the righteous. Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?*

Thirdly, God is patient, he hears us out : he will not ſnap us up or cut us off in the managing of our cauſe. As he hath a piercing eye, ſo a patient ear; yea it is no burden to him to hear, how much ſoever he hears; though we are long in drawing out our minds, even ſo long as would be tedious unto men, and tire the ear of an Angel, yet God bids us ſay on, and ſpeak out all. Thus the unerring knowledge, the unſtained juſtice, and the unwearied patience of God, may invite all that are upright into his preſence, *Who would not ſpeak unto the Almighty, and deſire to reaſon with him? And ſo we do in Prayer and Holy Meditation, in the ſecret diſputes and reaſonings of our Souls.* In all

all theſe we ſpeak to the Almighty, and he hath promiſed to give us answer to our doubts, eaſe and ſatisfaction to our Spirits. Though God doth not appear viſibly to us, or make answer audibly, yet when we ſpeak in Faith, and with ſincerity, he answers us really, and the effect is often made as clear to our experience, as if God had condeſcended to a free conference face to face.

Secondly, Forasmuch as Job after all theſe arguings with his friends, being ſtill unſatisfied, deſires to reaſon with God.

Obſerve, That when we cannot get ſatisfaction from men, we may yet expect it from God.

The reaſon of all things is in God, and though we muſt not reaſon with him, as contenders, yet we may and ought, as Learners. As it is the honour of Chriſt, that we ſhould go to him for ſalvation, ſo for inſtruction. He is our Prophet, as well as our Prieſt, our Oracle as well as our Advocate. He ſpeaks to us, as well as for us. What man cannot teach us, he will: We may carry our doubts from friend to friend, from Preacher to Preacher, and yet remain unſolved. As ſome ſickneſſes of the body are the *Phyſitians reproach*, he cannot remove them: ſo ſome Diſtempers and trouble of mind are (in that ſenſe) the *Preachers reproach*, he cannot cure or quiet them: yet, both body and mind may find remedy in ſpeaking unto the Almighty, and in reaſoning with God. *'Tis a fault in many that they are ſo ſlow in asking God, and ſo forward in asking men.* We ſhould ask God before men, and make him not our refuge only but our choice; we ſhould ſpeak to the Almighty, not only when men give us no answer, but before we ſeek their answer. It becometh us upon any doubt to enquire, firſt, of God by prayer, and to hearken what he will ſay to us in it. Many have had their ſcruples and troubles taken away by an immediate work or moving of God upon their hearts; and 'tis ſweeteſt and moſt reſreſhing when we have it ſo. It is the will of God that we ſhould uſe means, and take advice, both of Chriſtian friends, and of the Miniſters of Chriſt; God often goeth ſourth with their counſels, and makes them proſper: But if he withdraw his help from men, and appear not in their teachings, it is to draw us out yet more in ſeeking to be taught by him, and in deſiring that he would give us our comforts with his own hand, and tell us good tidings of peace and mercy with his own mouth. So he may

may be said to do, when after prayer and wrestlings with him, we find our spirits enlightened with the truth, or refreshed with the comforts we have been seeking for.

Thirdly Observe,

That an upright heart is not afraid to reason with God himself.

That justice and majesty of God, which make rotten hearts tremble, make the righteous rejoyce: It gladdes them, not only that God is gracious and merciful, but that he is just and holy: *Sing unto the Lord (O ye Saints of his) and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness, Psal. 30. 4.* *The remembrance of Gods holiness, fills them with joy who are holy.* Such love to reason with God, as much because he knows them, as because he is ready to pardon them. A godly man knows himself so sinful, that he needs the grace of God to pardon him, and yet he knows himself so sincere, that he fears not the justice of God should behold and try him. We say that is a good piece of cloath or stuff which the Merchant offers to a clear light, that is a good piece of gold which the pay-master willingly brings to the ballance and touchstone: So it is an argument of soundness and integrity, when the soul sets it self in the sight of God, who is light, and whose eye discerns what-every one is: who also hath a ballance and a touchstone in his hand, to weigh all men, and to try what mettall they are. David prayeth as hard to be searched as to be saved (*Psal. 139. 23, 24.*) *Search me O God and know my heart, try me and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me.* He knew he was a sinner, and he was assured God knew he was not wicked: had he been wicked, he would have had little minde to be searcht, or had his way been evil, he had never called to have it tryed. They that are deformed or foul-faced, hate the looking-glass. *And every one that doth evil, hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd (Joh. 3. 20.)* The word of God which is doctrinal light, deterres sinners, how much more doth God himself, who is essential light? *The sinners in Zion (saith the Prophet) are afraid, fearfulness hath surpris'd the hypocrites, who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? Isa. 33. 14.* But the Saints in Sion, they, who (as the same Prophet describes them in the next words) *walk righteously and speak uprightly*, they rejoyce in God as he is an everlasting burning, and as he is a devouring fire, for they know he

will neither devour nor burn them. God, who is a devouring fire to wicked men, is a reviving ſun to thoſe who fear his name, *Matth. 4. 1, 2.*

Verſe 4. *But ye are forgers of lies, ye are all Phyſitians of no value.*

But] or, *For* (ſo it may be rendered) *ye are forgers of lies, &c.* This verſe giveth a reaſon why *Job* would not continue any further debate with his friends, but apply himſelf to God. *Ye are forgers of lies.* Lying words can no more cure the minde, then improper medicines can heal the body : And he that ſpeaks lying words, gives not only improper, but poiſonous medicines to the minde.

Ye are forgers of lies.

780 *Compo-*
nere concinnare
q. d. vos estis
compositores
et quasi Archi-
teſti mendacis-
ram, ſignificat
etiam unum ap-
plicare alteri ut
fabricantes
ſolent.

Hos Auguſtinus
vocat fabulones
i. e. qui fabulas
vandas contexce-
runt Aug. Conf.
lib. 3. c. 6.

This is a ſevere charge and a high one. To tell lies is bad enough, but to forge lies is far worſe. The word ſignifies to diſpoſe or put any thing into exquisite order and method : As if he had ſaid, *You are compoſers of lies, you have the art of it, you are lye-makers, maſter workmen at the trade, the chief of liars.* It notes alſo the putting of one thing upon another, or the fitting them together, which is a further aggravation, you (which is the cuſtom of common lyars) put this lye upon that, and fit one to another, as a Joyner doth board to board in one frame. The Italian reads, *ye are botchers of lyes*, you gather up without order whatſoever comes next to hand for the ſtrengthening of your cauſe. But *forging* doth properly belong to a Smith, who puts his iron in the fire, to heat, and mollifie it, that he may work it with his hammer into what ſhape and forme he pleaſeth. Thus lyars do: they find a matter which is not ſhap'd fit for their turn and purpoſe, therefore they put it into the fire of their own imaginations, or into the flames of malice, and there they heat it, and then with their wit they hammer and faſhion it, and make it up into an inſtrument to wound the honour and reputation of others. So *David* complains (*Pſal. 50. 19.*) *Thou giveſt thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit.* And again (*Pſal. 119. 69.*) *The proud have forged a lye againſt me.*

Obſerve from the propriety of the word, which he uſeth to aggravate the greatneſs of their ſin.

That to be a plotter or contriver of ſin, is worſe then to be an actor of it. As

As every good action is by so much the better, so every evil action is by so much the worse, by how much it hath more, either of the head or heart in it. (*Psal. 5. 9.*) *Then hatest the workers of iniquity.* (*Mat. 7. 23.*) *Depart from me ye that work iniquity.* You that set your wits on work, you, who as it were keep a shop to work evil in, and make a trade of it, depart from me. *They that will not part from sin, must depart from God, whether they will or no.* The best of Saints on earth, do that which is sinful, but they are (as we may say) bunglers at it in comparison of these who make it their work, or make a business of it. The Saints do evil as natural men do good, or perform holy duties; these do but slubber over holy duties; and they (in this sense) do but slubber over evil, they have not the skill, that hellish skill, to form it up and make it a curious piece. Here lies the spirit of wickedness: *That sin is most ugly and deformed in the sight of God, and of those who are godly, which is contrived and compleated with greatest exactness and curiosity.*

Ye are forgers of lyes] A lye may be taken two wayes. Either more largely, for any falsity or untruth: Or secondly, more precisely and strictly, for that which is spoken, not only falsely, but knowingly, and with an intent to deceive. To lye, is to go against our own minds, or to affirm a thing which we are assured is not so. *Job* doth not charge his friends with lyes strictly taken, as if they had knowingly spoken that which was false, or as if they had done it with an intent and purpose to ensnare him: Such lying continued in, is inconsistent with godliness, and any one act of it strikes at the vitals of godliness. His friends supposed, and were very confident that they spake truth, and their aim was to instruct, not to intangle him by what they had spoken. As that which is well spoken, is often ill taken, so, that which is ill spoken, may have a good intent. 'Tis possible for a man to speak that which is false, with more honesty then some speak the truth: so did these friends of *Job*, who though they cannot be altogether excused, yet they must not be rashly censured. To clear up the matter yet further, consider, that

There is a threefold lye, ~~the~~ was shewed at the third verse of the eleventh Chapter.

1. A verbal lye, When we either make an untrue relation, or being asked, give a false answer to the question. Such was the lye of *Ananias* (*Act. 5. 3.*) *Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lye*

to the holy Ghost? The Apostle asked him if he sold the land for so much, yea, for so much, said he, when his own heart gave his tongue the lye for saying so.

2. There is a practical lye, When we act against what we speak, and unsay with our lives what we say with our lips: Many a mans hand gives his tongue the lye, and his works speak the falsity of his words. Lying is very abominable when it is only a *tongue-craft*, but it is then most abominable, when it is also a *handy-craft*.

3. There is a doctrinal lye, So is every error and unsound opinion. False notions are a lye in the understanding: The judgement mislead, misleads others. The Lord by his Prophet reproves such lyars (*Ezek. 13. 9.*) *Mine hand* (saith the Lord) *shall be upon the prophets that see vanity and divine lyes*; that is, lying doctrines, as is expounded (*vers. 22.*) *Because with lyes ye have made the heart of the righteous sad, whom I have not made sad, and strengthened the hands of the wicked that he should not return from his wicked way, by promising him life.* The Apostle John concludes against this sort of lyes, (*1 Job. 2. 21.*) *No lye is of the truth*, that is, no doctrinal lye, either about matters to be believed, or to be done, either concerning the mysteries of faith, or the rules of a holy life, is of the truth. *Nothing but truth can flow out, or follow from that which is true*; as that old rule in logick teacheth us. Many lyes have a likeness to truth, and most lyes are so bold as to claim kindred and alliance to the truth, but no doctrinal lye doth indeed receive life or breath, or any thing from any doctrinal truth, much less from him who is essential truth: To both which we extend St. Johns negative conclusion, *No lye is of the truth*.

Ex veris pos-
sunt, nil nisi
vera sequi.

Mendacium eo
referendum est,
quod neq;
rectum in consu-
lando nec in ad-
monendo modum
teneant, sed in-
utilibus & im-
portunis consilijs
& orationibus
utantur. Pin.

The lye which Job chargeth upon his friends in this place, is not a verbal lye, no nor a practical lye, but a doctrinal lye, as if he had said, *You have taught and maintained an error, though you have so great an opinion that you have all truth on your side: and that you are only upon the side of truth.*

But how doth it appear that his friends had forged doctrinal lyes, or maintained errors?

There are four things observable in their discourse with him, which give evidence to this accusation.

1. Because to defend the justice of God they concluded Job guilty: They knew not how to reconcile it, that God should be

be

be righteous in laying ſuch afflictions upon him, unleſs he were unrighteous; this was a doctrinal lye. The ſevereſt dealings of God with man in outward things, are no infallible marks of his diſfavour, as hath been cleared more then once from the ſubject of this Book.

2. He might charge them with forging of lyes, becauſe when they profeſſed they came *to mourn with him and to comfort him* (Chap. 2d.) they in ſtead of comforting him, made him mourn, and in ſtead of wiping off his tears, cauſed him to weep. Their words were gall and vinegar, not oyl and honey, as he both expected and needed. They ſpake much of the law, much of juſtice, but not a word, or but very little of free grace, and mercy, and when they did, they did ſo cloud and clogge it with conditions, and legal reſtrictions, that the poor man could not at all liſt up his head in any ſolid conſolation. They were not careful to ſtate his caſe right, or elſe it was hidden from their eyes, notwithstanding all their care: hence it was that they ſpake ſo much at random, as if they had not minded his condition, and laid load upon, in ſtead of eaſing his wearied ſoul.

*De lege multa
de gratia nihil
loquebantur.
Merc.*

3. He calleth them forgers of lyes, becauſe Zophar had charged him with an affected curioſity in ſearching into the ſecrets of God, and in prying into thoſe things which he would have hidden, chap. 11th. For, while he puts him that chiding queſtion (verſ. 7th.) *Canſt thou by ſearching find out God? Canſt thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?* He intimates plainly that Job had been attempting to ſearch out God, and had hopes to find him out unto perfection: This he ſpeaks out, verſe 12th. *For vain man would be wiſe, though he be born like a wilde aſſes colt.* As if he had ſaid, *Thou haſt an itch to be wiſe beyond ſobriety, thou haſt a moneths mind to feed thy fancy with hidden mysteries, the open truths of God will not ſerve thy turn:* Whereas indeed, Job only deſired to have his cauſe cleared up to his own ſpirit, and to ſee the reaſon why God contended with him. He did not curiouſly intrude himſelf into the counſels of God, but ſought that he might be better fitted to answer the call of God.

4. He taxeth them as forgers of lyes, becauſe they thought he only made a ſhew of holineſs, but was really wicked and falſe at heart. *Is this thy fear* (ſaid Eliphaz) *Is this thy hope? Is this thy uprightness?* ſee what an upright man thou art: Here's a goodly profeſſion. While they charged him unjuſtly with

hypocrisie, which is a practical lye, he justly charged them with error, which is a doctrinal lye. If any man saith that himself is so holy, that there is no sin in him, he lyes (saith the Apostle John, 1 Epist, chap. 1.) *and the truth is not in him*: and if any man say of another, because he is outwardly unhappy, that he lives in sin, and hath no goodness in him, this man lyes too, and hath not that particular truth in him, which would teach him not to judge of mens persons by events. These things laid together might stir up the passion of Job to that high and unfriendly language against his friends, *Ye are forgers of lyes, and*

Ye are all Physitians of no value.

לְרֵאשִׁי
Medici nihili,
i. e. prorsus vel
omnino vos estis
falsi medici
לְרֵאשִׁי Signifi-
cat, vanitatem,
falsitatem, Idol-
lun.

There are two sorts of Physitians, the one in a proper, the other in a metaphorical sense. A Physitian properly taken, is a Student in nature, and learned in the temper, constitution and parts of the body: his business lyes either in the preventing or curing of bodily diseases, which are enemies to the life and subverters of the strength of man. *Jobs* friends were not Physitians in this sense, or if they were, yet he opposeth them not in their Philosophy, but Divinity: And their errand to him, was not to heal the disease in his flesh, but to remove the sorrows and distempers of his spirit. His friends were his Physitians in a figure. In the same sense that the soul is said to be sick, and the mind deceased, the soul and the mind have their Physitian. The soul Physitian doth not give counsel for the preparing of Medicines, but his very counsels are the Medicines, his word (that being the word or mind of God) is both the purge and cordial: Such Physitians *Jobs* friends would have been, but he complains of them, that, either their Medicines were spiritless, and had no effect at all, or else that they wrought too violently; and hence it is that though he call them by an honourable name, Physitians, yet he abates it by an undervaluing Epithete, *Physitians*

Of no value.

v. pastor
meo nihili.
lun.

The word is used, though not in the same construction (*Zach. 11. 17.*) *Wo to the Idol Shepherd*: Some render there to the shepherd of an Idol, or of a vain thing: others, *Wo to the shepherd* of

of no value, or who is good for nothing, unleſs it be to feed upon, and devour the flock. The word *Elil*, ſignifieth vanity or falſehood, it ſignifieth alſo an Idol, ſome ſay from the root, *All*, in Engliſh, *not*, and ſo *Elil*, is as much as *nullity*, or *nothingneſs*. Idols are nullities, *an Idol is nothing in the world* (1 Cor. 8.) and to ſay that a man is an *Idol Phyſitian*, is all one, as to ſay, he is no Phyſitian, or a Phyſitian of no value. Rabbi *Levi* notes that the duplication of the letter *lamed*, ſhews the extreame nothingneſs that was (as to this purpoſe) in theſe Phyſitians.

There are divers conjectures among interpreters about the reaſon of this ſtile.

Some thus, *Phyſitians of an Idol*, that is, you are to me like thoſe Phyſitians who undertake to cure a dumb Idol, a ſtock or a ſtone: For as they that give phyſick to an Idol, or apply medicines to a liveleſs Image, cannot profit it at all, or cauſe it to live, ſo you have done no more good to me then if you had beſtowed all your potions and medicines upon an Idol, for I am not at all healed nor recovered by them.

Secondly, One of the Rabbins tells us from the *Talmud*, that *Alal*, ſignifies the *ſinnew in the neck*, or the *neck bone*, and ſo it is a proverbial ſpeech; when they would expreſs a vain boaiſting Phyſitian, they ſay he is a *Phyſitian of the neck bone*: he that undertakes an impoſſible cure, is as one that undertakes to ſet the *neck bone*, which our Engliſh proverb puts among impoſſibles, *If you have broke your neck, come to me and I will ſet it*. This ſenſe may have ſome admittance here. As if Job had ſaid, *You are as Phyſitians of the neck bone, you promiſed to do great matters, to reſolve my doubts, and eaſe me of my ſorrrows, but I ſee, (the way you go to work) it is impoſſible to be done*. If a man, ſaith the Apoſtle (Gal. 6. 1.) *be overtaken with a fault, ye that are ſpiritual reſtore ſuch a man in the ſpirit of meekneſs*. The word in the Greek ſignifies to ſet a bone, put him in joynt again, handle him gently and tenderly, reſtore him with a ſpirit of meekneſs, ſo it becomes a ſpiritual Phyſitian.

Thirdly, *A Phyſitian of no value, or an Idol Phyſitian*, is a Phyſitian who can do no more good then an Idol, which is none at all. The Pſalmiſt ſaith of Idols, *They have eyes and ſee not, hands and handle not, ears and hear not, feet and cannot walk*; that is, there is no help to be had from them. Job's friends gave him cauſe to call them *Idol Phyſitians* in this ſenſe alſo. As if he had

Simpliciſſimum eſt 7178 pro nihilo exponere ab 728 non, hinc Idola dicta quaſi nibilitates. Merc.

Rabbi Levi notat eſſe deductum ab 7-2 non, geminata litera lamed, ad extreman nullitatem indicandam.

Medici idoli, i.e. ſicut medici qui curant Idolum, truncum aut ſtipitem, qui quamvis multa adhibeant pharmacum nihil efficiunt Pined.

Apud Thalmu- diſtas 778 eſt

nervus colli, qui ſi laſus fuerit nunquam poſtea curari poteſt, unde medici 778 dicti, qui quod promittunt præſtare non poſſunt. R. Sol.

Medici Idoli, i.e. veluti Idola mortua ſine ſenſu ſine auxilio, ut lapideus Apollo aut legneus Aſculapius.

*Homo homini
Deut.*

had ſaid, *A ſtatue upon a wall, or the picture of a Phyſitian, an Apollo cut in a ſtone, or an Eſculapius in a wood, might have cured me as much as you have done: yea you have rather done me hurt then good. Whereas a man ſhould be not only a Phyſitian but a God to man, you are not ſo much as men, ye are but Idols; your words help me no more then a ſtock or a ſtone, which cannot give to him that is in want, nor reſreſh him that is weak.*

Fourthly, We may take the words in a more mollifying ſenſe. *Ye are Phyſitians of no value, that is, you are unſkilful Phyſitians, you have neither brought that credit to your ſelves, nor that comfort to me which I expected; your art hath failed you, and your practice is unſucceſſful.*

There are four things that make a Phyſitian of no value, or his labour of no effect, and all theſe did meet in *Jobs* friends.

1. When a Phyſitian doth not fully know the name or nature of that diſeaſe, under which his patient labourerh. We ſay, *If a diſeaſe be known it is half cured; whereas he that doth not know it can never cure it, unleſs by gueſſs or accident.* Such cure as *Empericks*, not as Phyſitians, if they cure at all.

2. As a Phyſitian ſhould know the name and nature of the diſeaſe, ſo, that he may be a Phyſitian of value, he muſt know the cauſe of the diſeaſe. The cure is found in the cauſe: to diſcover whence the diſtemper grew, and what the occaſion of it was, directs unto the remedy.

3. He is a Phyſitian of no value, who giveth hurtful medicines, medicines that are unſafe and noxious, ſuch as rather kill then cure.

*Vanus medicus
eſt qui et ſi bo-
na medicamen-
ta egrotis exhi-
buerit, non ha-
bitat tamen e-
jus corporis vel
morbi ratione,
&c. Merc.*

4. Suppose the medicine be in it ſelf good, yet if it be not rightly applied, or not applied at a right time, the effect is loſt. A man may do as much hurt by giving a good medicine, as by giving an ill one: For as we ſay of food, *that which is one mans meat, is another mans poiſon; ſo much more of phyſick, what is one mans help, is another mans death.* Theſe four things muſt concur in a good Phyſitian, and a failing in any of them makes a Phyſitian of no value.

Job found ^{his} friends (in ſome degree or other) failed in all theſe. They did not ſee into the nature of his trouble: they thought it a puniſhment from the revenging hand of God as a Judge, when as it was but a tryal or a temptation from the chaſtening hand of God as a father: They did not diſcern the true

true causes of it, they thought it was for the discovery of his hypocritie, and of the justice of God: whereas it was for the discovery of his sincerity, and of the goodness of God: They prepared some medicines of unsound ingredients; as that God will speedily give outward good things to such as are good. And lastly, those that were sound they misapplied: Thus *Job* was wounded with their salves, made sick with their medicines, and his very Physicians were a disease unto him.

Afferbant bonis semper bene evenire, quod falsum est. Mos.

Hence Observe,

First, From the allusion, *That the soul hath its sickness as well as the body.*

The soul hath its feavers, consumptions and impostumations: There is not any disease of the body, but some have curiously found out a parallel distemper in the soul. *Solomon* in his prayer at the dedication of the Temple calls every one to know the plague of his own heart. 'Tis hard to know our own spiritual diseases, but it is harder to know the diseases of other mens spirits.

Secondly, Observe,

Good counsel and wholesome instruction is as physick and medicines to the soul.

As the word is meat, so medicine too: the word is meat to feed and refresh the healthy soul, and the word is medicine to cure and raise the soul that is weak and sickly. There is no soul-disease, but we may find a remedy for it in the word. *The Lord* (saith the Prophet, *Isa.* 50. 3, 4.) hath given me the tongue of the learned (what learning was it? was it the learning of Philosophers? No, it was this) *That I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary.* There is a word which will ease the soul of its burthen, and cure the soul of its disease, if it be spoken in its season.

Anime agrotantis medicum est oratio.

Thirdly, Observe,

He is a soul-physitian of no value, who makes wrong application of truths, as well as he who applies that which is false.

To preach the Law, and the terrours of it, to preach the Justice of God and the severity of it, these are truths: but for a man to preach these to a poor broken soul, to a soul that lieth languishing and trembling under the hand of God; to a soul that hath the pillars of its comfort shaken with the breakings in of divine wrath, this man is a *Physitian of no value.* For though the things

are true, yet they are ill tim'd and applied; such a soul should have supports and cordials from the Covenant of Grace, to refresh his fainting spirits; such a one should have the oil of gladness poured into his wounds, his belly should be filled with the strongest wine of consolation: On the other hand, when a soul is stubborn in impenitency, or high-flown with presumption, going on in the pride of his heart, yet saying I shall have peace; to apply promises of mercy, the glad tidings of salvation, the freeness of grace to such a soul, may be its hardening and undoing: Though mercy may be tendered to the ungodly, for God justifieth the ungodly; yet we must not say to a man that perseveres in his ungodliness, that God will justify him, but that God will condemn him. The worst of sinners may be saved, but we must let him know God will not save him in his sin. Woe unto us if we cry peace to those who make war with God. To deal gently with such, is to be cruel both to theirs and our own souls. Such must be thundered at, as Paul did at Elymas (Act. 13. 10. *Thou Child of the Devil and enemy to all Righteousness: This was the language even of Paul who preached the grace of the Gospel as high as ever man did.* To flatter those that persevere in sin, is to destroy them; smooth words to the wicked are as drawn swords: The doctrine of the law and the doctrine of free grace must be preached distinctly, and set out in their several natures, and rightly applied to their proper objects. We may be Physicians of no value while we prescribe that which in its own nature is wholesome physick. The word of God must be rightly divided: Every soul must have his own portion. The childrens bread is not for dogs: And though they who are dogs in the sense of their own unworthiness, may gather up the crumbs that fall from, yea may eat the whole loaf (whole Christ) which is upon the childrens table, yet they who are dogs indeed ought not to be offered a crum of it. The Prophet Ezekiel reproves the false prophets severely for misapplying the threatenings and promises of God; for giving bread to the dogs, and throwing stones at the children. *Will you pollute me* (saith God) *chap. 13. 19. among my people?* How is God polluted? He is infinitely above all pollution. He is polluted when any shall make him the author and maintainer of their lies, or when they speak so of his truths that they encourage any in their pollutions. We pollute the word of God (yea God himself) when we mis-apply

apply it to favour and ſide with the pollutions of evil men, or when we do not apply it to eaſe and revive the ſpirits of good men, *Will ye pollute me among my people, to ſlay the ſouls that ſhould not die, and to ſave the ſouls alive that ſhould not live?* The ſouls that ſhould not die are ſaid to be ſlain, when we threaten where we ſhould promiſe; and we ſave the ſouls alive that ſhould not live, when we promiſe where we ſhould threaten. Though the unſkilfulneſs or unfaithfulneſs of man cannot make the faithfulneſs and counſels of God of none effect, either by ſlaying one ſoul of whom he hath ſaid, *live*, or by ſaving one ſoul of whom he hath ſaid, *die*: Yet they whoſe words run knowingly croſs to the word and will of God, are juſtly charged with ſlaying thoſe whom God will ſave, and with ſaving thoſe whom God will ſlay. As they who willingly ſcandalize a brother by any, to him doubtful, practice, are ſaid to deſtroy him for whom Chriſt died (*Rom. 15. 15. 1 Cor. 8. 11.*) becauſe they do as much as in them lies to deſtroy and cauſe him to periſh for whom Chriſt died, though indeed it be impoſſible for ſuch to periſh or be deſtroyed. So alſo are we to expound the Prophet; theſe do what in them lies to ſlay the ſouls that ſhould live, though indeed ſuch ſhall not be ſlain: and this, if any thing, is to be, as *Job* rebukes his friends, *a Phyſician of no value: An Idol, a no Phyſician, or one as good as none: ſeeing it were as good to do never a whit, as never the better.*

Job having thus reprov'd his friends, and made an appeal to God, gives them advice in the next words, not to ſpeak a word more unleſs it were to better purpoſe then what they had already ſpoken. *O that you would altogether hold your peace!*

J O B Chap. 13. Vers. 5, 6, 7, 8.

O that you would altogether hold your peace, and it should be your wisdom.

Hear now my reasoning, and hearken to the pleading of my lips.

Will you speak wickedly for God? and talk deceitfully for him?

Will ye accept his person? will ye contend for God?

JO B having shewed his friends their error in what they had spoken, desireth they would speak no more, unless they could do it to better purpose: He calls upon them aloud to stop their mouths (vers. 5.) and to open their ears (vers. 6.) *being men (as he conceived) more fit to learn than teach.* He presseth this counsel by divers arguments: two of which we have in this Context.

The first at the close of the 5th verse, *And it should be your wisdom.* The argument lies thus, *It is best to do that which will be your wisdom if you do it. But to stop your mouths and open your ears, to be silent and hear, will be your wisdom: Therefore you were best to follow my advice, and hold your peace.*

A second argument is contained in the 7th and 8th verses, and it is drawn from the sin and danger of it, in case they should proceed to speak as they had done; *Will you speak wickedly for God? &c.* He seems to reason with them thus, *It is not good for you to go on in sin and wickedness. But in speaking thus, ye sin, and do wickedly: Therefore it is not good for you to go on in speaking thus: be ye therefore silent, and attend unto what I have now to say.*

O that ye would altogether hold your peace!

Quis det ut tacendo taceretis.

Qui Fodit, et ravit, per antiphrasin, nihil egit, sinit.

O that ye] The Hebrew is, *Who would give this to you? or, O that some-body would bestow this gift, the gift of silence, upon you, unless you had a happier gift in speaking.*

That ye would altogether hold your peace.

The word which we translate, *to hold the peace, or to be silent,* signifies

signifies properly to dig or plow the ground, to be very busie; and by an *Antiphrasis* (frequent in the Hebrew tongue, which imployes many words to contrary senses) it signifies to do nothing and to be silent, but to be altogether idle: so they are, who neither do nor speak. Further, Here is more than a bare wish for silence, here is an enforcement to it, *O that ye would altogether hold your peace!* The letter is, *O that you in being silent, would be silent, or, O that you would be most silent in silence!* Job thus strongly bespeaking the silence of his friends, may have a threefold reference; or at least he referreth to some one of these three things.

First, To the speech of Zophar, at the 3^d verse of the 11th Chapter, who had thus reprov'd Job, *Should thy lies make men hold their peace?* Here Job replies, As if he had said, *You told me that it was uncomely, my lies should make men hold their peace; or that no man could hold his peace at my lies, but surely you have spoken such lies (so he charges them in the verse foregoing) and have talked so much at random, that it would very well become you to hold your peace, and to be as mute as fishes: to speak no more will be your best rhetoric; or rather, you will speak most when you speak no more, your silence will be more persuasive than your speech hath been.*

Secondly, This desire of perpetual silence, may have reference to that seven daies silence which we read of in the second Chapter of this Book; when Job's friends came to mourn with him and to comfort him, the text saith that *they sat down seven dayes, and no man spake a word to him.* Now, saith Job, *Ye held your peace a great while when you came to me; truly it had been very well for me if you had altogether held your peace; and I would you would now remember your first posture; and as you began with silence, so conclude: sit and say nothing, O that you would altogether hold your peace.*

Thirdly, We may refer it to the whole matter of the contest between him and his friends: As if he had said, *Forasmuch as by all that you have spoken, you have not at all abated my pain, nor resolved my doubts, nor comforted my spirit, nor done me any good, I wish you would give over speaking. Seeing your speech is so fruitless, I wish you would be speechless; O that you would altogether hold your peace! and whereas you have gained no reputation of wisdom by speaking, you may by forbearing to speak, as it follows in the text.*

And it should be your wisdom.

Properly there is no wisdom in silence. Silence is a privative, at least a negative. As dumbness is a total, so silence is a temporary privation of speech: But wisdom is a positive, and among habits the most excellent habit. *He that is really a fool, is a fool though silent, he is not wise because he hides his folly.* So that, when Job saith, *It should be your wisdom,* his meaning is, this would be your wisest course; of the two you would shew your selves wiser men by silence, then by talking at such a rate of indiscretion as some of you have done. Silence may be the covering of folly, but no silence can be the cure of it: or silence may cause others to think we are wise, but it cannot make any man wise.

Alq. utinam taceretis ut putaremini esse sapientes. Vulg.

(Prov. 17. 28.) *Solomon giveth us that rule, Even a fool when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise; he doth not say he is wise, but he is counted so; he is counted wise, because he hath this happiness not to discover his want of wisdom. Yet further, as a fool may gain the reputation of that wisdom which he hath not, if he be but wise enough to hold his peace; so a wise man may shew the wisdom which he hath by holding his peace, when speaking is unseasonable, or when himself may learn by giving others, who are wiser and more able than himself, the greater liberty of speaking. It is a good piece of learning to learn not to speak, as well as to speak well: nature teaches us to speak, art teaches us to speak well; but virtue and grace teach us not to speak. A wise man will be silent as a learner, that he may be fitted to speak as a teacher.* The Apostles Canon concerning women, hath its use in respect of many men, *let them learn in silence,* 1 Tim. 2. 11.

Disceamus prius non loqui, ut post modum ad loquendum ora referamus, & post multum silentium ex discipulis efficiamur magistri. Hieron. in 3. cap. Eccles.

Hence Observe,

First, *That in some cases it is wisdom to be silent.*

Solomon tells us (Eccles. 3. 9.) that there is a season for silence; *Everything is beautiful in its season,* so silence, and so is speech. It is a great part of prudence to know when to be silent, and when to speak. *There is (saith he) a time to keep silence, and a time to speak:* When it is a time to speak, silence is our folly; and when it is a time to keep silence, speaking is our folly. There are seven special seasons of speaking, and seven of silence.

The seven seasons of speaking are these,

1. (Which is a general) When by speaking we may bring glory to God, and do good to our brethren.

2. When

2. When we have an opportunity to vindicate the honour, and truth of God.

3. When we may relieve the credit of a brother that is wronged.

4. When, by speaking, we may instruct or direct those that are ignorant.

5. When we may comfort and support those that are weak.

6. When we may resolve and settle those that are in doubt.

7. When we may duly reprove and convince those that do evil.

At such times as these we have occasion to speak, and then it is our sin or our weakness, nothing at all of wisdom, to be silent.

There are also seven special seasons of silence, and then it is our wisdom not to speak. Such as these :

1. It is never in season to speak, till we have a call. 'Tis as impertinent to be busie with our tongues, as with our hands, in other mens matters, unless they or the providence of God, or our present duty bespeaks us.

2. It is a season to be silent, when we are not rightly informed in or about the state of the matter or question to which we must speak : Such shall do well to speak their own doubts, but they are unfit to give others resolution. He must be a master of the question who makes a determination upon it : and until he hath the compass of it in himself, he can never draw it to a good conclusion.

3. When we know the state of a question, yet we must not speak without a suitable preparation, either actual or habitual : Be not rash to utter a thing before God or man. The Apostle *James* bids us be *swift to hear, and slow to speak*; yet we must not hear till we are prepared, then much lets may we speak.

4. It is a season to be silent, when what we speak is like to be a snare unto our selves. *When they hate him that rebuketh in the gate, and abhor him that speaketh uprightly; when they afflict the just, and turn aside the poor in the gate* (*Amos 5. 10. 12.*) Then (*verſ. 13.*) *the prudent shall keep silence, for it is an evil time.* But must not evil times, or the worst evils of worst times be spoken against, lest we bring our selves into an evil snare? Must we never

never speak but when we are sure to come off well and save our skins? Yes, at our peril we must speak when there is greatest peril: so did the ancient Prophets, so did the holy Apostles: Yet (though another interpretation may be given of that place in the Prophet, making the silence of the prudent in evil times to be their acquiescence in the evils of punishment which God brings, not their quietness with the evils of sin which men commit: and so their silence is opposed to murmuring against God, not to their speaking against, or reproof of men) yet (I say) we may be silent from reproving men, 1. When there is no probability that the evil which we bring our selves into shall be balanced with any proportionable good to others. 2. When those sins have been sufficiently witnessed against already, so that men sin not for want of light, but directly against it. In such a time as this we have no obligation to run upon our own danger. That's the rule of Christ (*Mat. 7. 6.*) *Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rent you.* Where we see, as Christ will not have his word offered some sort of obstinate hardened sinners (shadowed under the names of swine and dogs) lest they should abuse it, so lest they should abuse those that bring it. He provides, as for the honour of the Gospel, so for the safety of those who publish the Gospel.

5. As it is a season for silence when the passions and corruptions of others are up, so when our own passions or corruptions are up. It had been better for meek *Moses* to have held his peace, then to have spoken when the people provoked him to anger, for then he spake unadvisedly with his lips. *Passion is an ill counsellour, and as bad a speaker.* A man is not fit to reprove or speak angrily, when he is angry. Storms at the tongue are never so seasonable as when there is a calm upon the heart: He was a wise man, who when he saw a man angry, would advise him to say over all the letters of the Alphabet, before he ventured to put any two of them together or speak a word.

6. It is a season for silence, when men are not capable of what we speak. Words are lost, not only upon a meer sot, a fool, a mad man, but upon such as are indisposed to hear them. *Abigail* saw it was no time to speak to *Nabal* when he was drunken, and his heart merry with wine, therefore she told him nothing, less or more, till the morning light, 1 Sam. 25. 36. Christ tels his disciples (*Joh.*

(Job. 16. 12.) *I have many things to ſay unto you, but you cannot hear them now.* The *now* was not ſeaſonable, therefore Chriſt was ſilent.

7. It is a ſeaſon of ſilence, When what we ſpeak may be a grief and burthen to the ſpirits of any, eſpecially of thoſe that are already afflicted; we muſt not make the green wound bleed afreſh; nor at any time ſpeak to the wounding of any whom God would have us heal. In theſe caſes it is our wiſdom to hold our peace.

There are three ſorts of *peace-holders*.

Fiſt, there are ſome who hold their peace, and it is their cunning, they are ſilent upon deſign; it is not their wiſdom, but their craft; they will ſay nothing leſt they ſhould diſcover themſelves.

Secondly, There are others who hold their peace, and it is their weakneſs; They ſpeak not, becauſe they cannot ſpeak, either what they ought, or as they ought.

Thirdly, There are thoſe who hold their peace, and it is their wiſdom, as in the caſes before alleaged.

Secondly, Obſerve,

Speech diſcovereth what we are.

When Job ſaith, if you would hold your peace, *it ſhould be Eloquent ut in your wiſdom*, it was an argument that the ſpeech of theſe men *videam* had diſcover'd their folly: *We may ſee what men are by what they ſpeak*, as well as by what they do: and by theſe two, all of man, that is knowable by man, may be known. What we are in being, the ſame we are in acting and in ſpeaking, if we act or ſpeak our ſelves. Man is made as viſible by what he ſpeaks, as what he ſpeaks is audible. *Speech it is the Image of the ſoul, or the looking-glaſs of the mind.* *Oratio eſt imago vel ſpeculum animi: ut viv eſt ita ejus oratio.* As we ſee our faces in a glaſs, ſo others may ſee the face or representation of our ſpirits upon our ſpeech. The faſhion of the body ſhines by reflexion in the glaſs, and *the form and frame of our hearts is reflected from our lips.* *Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth ſpeaks:* And as we take veſſels or glaſſes, and knock upon them, that by the ſound we may perceive whether they be whole or crackt; ſo the ſound which we make diſcovers whether we be crackt or ſound: The crack in the glaſs would not be ſeen eaſily, if it were not heard; and many a mans folly and ignorance would not appear, could he but keep his own counſel.

B b b

Job,

Job, having laboured to speak his friends into silence, now labours to gain audience whilst himself speaks.

Verse 6. *Hear now my reasoning, and hearken to the pleadings of my lips.*

Both the parts of the verse are of one interpretation; only the sense is heightened in the later.

Hear now my reasoning.

יבם *Correpti-*

onem, confutati-

onem, reprehend-

sionem, abjur-

gatione denotat,

ut apud Græcos

ἐλεγχοί.

Non imperiosè

gubet, sed vehe-

mentér optat.

Pined.

The word which we translate *reasoning*, signifies also, *reproof*, *redargution*, *correction*, or *conviction*.

We may take it for any discourse by way of argument, where-
with a man doth either defend what himself, or reprove what
others have done or spoken.

The form of speech is imperative or by way of command, yet we are not to take it, as if Job in a Lordly tone imposed silence upon his friends: though his language was Imperative, yet his spirit was not Imperious. His words carry a vehemency in counsel; not the authority of a command: As if he had said, O that I could obtain thus much favour from you, that forbearing a while to say any more, you would now hear what I have to say.

And hearken to the pleadings of my lips.

קטש Notat

gestum diligenter

ser anſcultātis:

plus valet quā

שמע sc. nois

solum attende-

re, sed intendere

ਅੰਤਿਮ।

To *hearken*, is more then to *hear*; for it imports a man purposely setting himself in a posture to hear, or taking pains to hear; we may see the attention of the mind in the composedness of the body. **He that hearkens puts himself into a learning frame.** Careless behaviour shews a careless hearer. The word here used, notes mind and body in a readiness to catch any thing that is spoken, or the attention and intencion of the ear and heart together.

To the pleadings of my lips.

Eß iudī.

bio contendere

vel litigare bin

aliqui, licet,

werthet, &

Tygyr contenti-

84577.

Or, to the chidings of my lips; As if he had said, *I must deal sharply, severely and plainly with you, I must speak home and tell you your own.* Some conceive that Job useth this word to meet with the conception of his friends concerning what he had spoken. Come (saith he) *I knew you think I have been too sharp all this while, that I have been rather chiding then disputing; well, if*

*You have that opinion of my former diſcourſe, let it be ſo; now conſe-
on, hear my chidings once more, hearken to my earneſt pleadings.
Or (as others) to that Apologetical narration which I make for
my ſelf.*

Hence Obſerve,

Fiſt, *It is the duty of a man to make defence for himſelf, and to
apologize in his own cauſe.*

He that is innocent muſt not let his integrity lie ſtained or
blotted, and not ſtir his tongue to vindicate and diſperſe it.
It is a duty to ſtand up for another who is wronged, much
more for our ſelves, we being nearer to our ſelves than to any
other.

Secondly, *It becomes us, not only to hear, but diligently to
hearken unto them who deſire to ſet themſelves right in our
thoughts.*

Some ears thirſt for ſlanders, and can greedily drink in an ill
report of their brethren, yet will not have the patience to hear
their defence. 'Tis hard to poſſeſs thoſe with the truth of a
mans cauſe, who are prepoſſeſſed with an ill opinion of him.
Love thinks no evil of others, and is not willing to hear it. Juſtice
thinks no evil of others, till it hath heard it, and concludes no
evil of others till it hath heard them. As the Judge muſt hear
what the witneſs can ſay againſt the party accused, ſo what the
party accused can ſay for himſelf: In this ſenſe, that of the Apo-
ſtle James ſhould obtain with us; *be ſwift to hear, ſlow to ſpeak,
and ſlow to wrath*, Jam. 1. 19. We ſhould be more forward to hear
what a man can plead in his own juſtification, then we are to
ſpeak to his condemnation; we ſhould be more forward to hear
him, then to be wroth and angry with him.

Thirdly, Obſerve,

*Man accounts it a diſhonour, if he be not heard and hearkened
to when he ſpeaks.*

Not to hear a mans words, is within a degree as diſgraceful,
as to give him diſgraceful words. 'Tis ill when we only give
another the hearing, who ſpeaks the truth; but it is worſe when
we will not ſo much as give him a hearing. Some hear much and
do not regard; others regard ſo little, that they do not hear;
either of theſe is a ſlight put upon man. Now if it be a diſhonour
to man to be ſlighted when he ſpeaks, what a diſhonour do they
put upon God, who ſlight what he ſpeaks? How often (as Job

here with his friends) doth God plead with man for audience? (*Psal. 81. 8.*) *Hear O my people, and I will testifie unto thee; O Israel if thou wilt hearken unto me.* How often did he send his Prophets, with, *Hear now the word of the Lord?* And when after these, his own and his Prophets, wooings for attention to the words of his counsel and command, he found the people stopping their ears, and refusing to hear, how doth he again open his mouth in wrath, and thunder out words of cursing and consumption, which whether they would hear, or whether they would forbear, they must both see and feel. *Neither God nor man can bear it, to speak and not be heard. Hear now my reasoning* (*saith Job*) *and hearken to the pleadings of my lips.*

Job having made his preface, and called for attention, enters upon the matter of his reproof.

Verse 7. *Will you speak wickedly for God? and talk deceitfully for him?*

*Iam incipit di-
sta sociorum
refutare. Merc.
הלל
רדכו*

In this, and the next verse, *Job* doubleth his words; and that he might make them hear twice, he speaks the same thing more than once. *Will ye speak wickedly for God?* is the same with, *and talk deceitfully for him.* *Will ye accept his person?* is the same with, *Will ye contend for God?* In the heat of his discourse, he doth not only propose, but press, not only speak, but repeat what he had to say over and over. *Will ye speak wickedly for God? and talk deceitfully for him?* When we earnestly oppose what another saith or doth, we say, *Will ye, Will ye.*

Will ye speak wickedly for God?

The letter is, *Will ye speak iniquity for God?* There is a three-fold reading of that clause, *Will ye speak wickedly.* 1. of God. 2. to God. 3. for God. Mr. Broughton takes the first, *Will ye speak unrightly of the Almighty?* we the last, *Will ye speak wickedly for God?*

*Numquid non
coram Deo lo-
quimini, &
ante conspectum
eius profertis
dolum?*

The sense comes near to one in all three. The Septuagint render it as an argument why they should take heed what they speak, because of the person before whom they spake. *Do you not speak before God? and will ye speak deceitfully in his presence? Do you not know where you are? remember that you are in Gods presence, he sees and he hears you: Do you think that none hears you but I that am a poor creature in pain and misery? The great God of heaven and earth heareth you: Do you not speak before God? and*

if

Reshoot
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thus. As we must not do evil that good may come to our selves, so we must not do evil that good may come to God, *Rom. 3. 8.* The Apostle rejects the very thought of such a design with a kind of horror and detestation; for he had no sooner repeated that impudent and blasphemous slander (*some affirm that we say, Let us do evil that good may come*) but presently he blasts both it and them, with this dreadful judgment, *whose damnation is just*: If they deserved damnation, who put such an opinion upon the Apostles, what do they who practise it? They who suppose themselves such skilful Alchymists, in drawing good out of evil, that (to try their skill) they will do evil, hoping to draw good out of it, shall find at last, that they have drawn damnation upon themselves by that tryal. But some may object, Doth not the Apostle confess at the 7th verse, that he had done evil for that end, and that having attained a good end, he thought himself excused for the evil of his way: *If the truth of God hath more abounded through my lye, unto his glory, why yet am I judged as a sinner?* It seems then the Apostle had told lies for the upholding of truth, and that the truth of God had abounded to the glory of God through his lies. I answer, The Apostle doth not speak those words in his own person, or in the person of a godly man, but the person of a profane Objector, whom he confuteth: As if he had said, *Some man possibly may plead thus for his sin; The truth of God hath gained by my lie, and if so, why am I judged as a sinner? They are shining sins indeed which cause the glory of God to shine more bright. Can I be a loser where God gains? Surely I cannot. I may rather encourage my self to do evil (as we, saith the Apostle, are also affirmed to say) that good may come.* So then, the Apostle doth but repeat and refute what some said for themselves, and of the Apostles; he doth not in the least affirm it of himself. **God often brings good out of the worst of evils, but that's no thank to those who commit the evil.** Evil can produce nothing naturally but evil; it is a divine power and wisdom which overmasters it unto good. **The way which God hath taught us to glorifie him by, is to do that which is good, and to speak the truth; and though he can raise glory to himself out of the evil which we do, and out of the lies which we publish, yet he never calls for our evil or for our lie to raise his glory.** The Psalmist assures us (*Psal. 16. 2.*) *My goodness extendeth not to thee;* and if God hath no need of our

our goodness, surely he hath none of our evil: He wants not our help, though he bespeaks it, and may command it: VVhy then should any man *speake wickedly for God?*

And talk deceitfully for him? or, Talk deceit for him.

The sense is the same as before. The word which we translate *deceit*, is a noun, and signifieth hope frustrated, or the deceiving of expectation. A bow which carries the arrow false, is thus exprest, *a deceitful bow*, because it frustrates the Archers aim, sending an arrow beside or above the mark. It signifies also a man that is *slow of foot*, dull and lazy, a man of a flegmatique and unactive spirit: *a slothfull man is a deceiver, he deceiveth himself, and he deceiveth those that imploy and set him a work: he doth his own business but by halves, and if any trust him he will deceive them wholly.*

רמיה נא de-
septio, & fru-
stratio ut
קשה רמיה
arcus frustrans.
Piger dicitur
איש רמיה
Quia decipitur
ipse spe & fru-
strantur qui ei
quicquam com-
mittunt. Coc.

Job giveth yet a further charge upon his friends, in the expostulations of the next verse.

Verse 8. *Will ye accept his person? will ye contend for God?*

Will ye accept his person?

There is a different reading of these words. Some thus, *Will ye put your selves into the room or place of God? Will ye personate God?* so the word bears; signifying, as to accept, so to sustain or represent another person. VVill you take upon you the place of God, or stand in his stead? Will ye be as Gods deputies and vicegerents, as if you had commission under the great seal of heaven to deal thus with me? or will ye take the office of God upon you, to judge the heart, and of the secrets which are lodged there? You judge me an hypocrite; let me profess what I will of my own integrity, let me produce the fairest proofs of my uprightness, yet you judge me an hypocrite, and conclude me a wicked man; will ye thus take the sole priviledge of God upon you, and judge my heart?

נשא In hac
phrasi, non tol-
lendi sed acci-
piendi notionem
habet.
Nasa sustinere,
sustentare, eo
quod patroni
clientum perso-
nam quodamodo
sustinent, Bol.
Faciem Dei ac-
cipere est perso-
nam Dei agere
& representare
& ejus vice ac
munere judi-
candi fungi.

Hence Observe,

They that take upon them to judge the heart, or to judge of that which doth not appear, take upon themselves the place of God.

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it? (Jer. 17. 9.) Man cannot know his own heart, much less

less

less can he know the heart of another man. God takes that honour to himself (*vers. 10.*) *I the Lord search the heart.* Only he that is invisible, is able to see into that which is invisible. Christ gives a rule for judgment: *Judge not according to the appearance,* (*Joh. 7. 24.*) yet we must not judge of that which doth not appear; we must search before we judge, because many things are not, either in regard of good or evil, as they appear; but if nothing appear after searching, we must suspend our judgment. That which doth not appear must be left to the judgment of God, at his appearing; so the Apostle directs (*1 Cor. 4. 5.*) *Judge nothing before the time:* What is the time? The next words shew it, *Till the Lord come;* that is, till he come to judgment. But must we reserve all judiciary proceedings to that day? No, Magistrates must do justice, and therefore they must judge every day. His meaning then is, judge nothing which doth not appear; he takes not away civil judgment upon proof (as some have abused that text) but only that judgment which hath no proof, as the Apostle explains himself in the sequel of that dehortation. *Judge nothing before the time, untill the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the heart.* As if he had said, That kind of judgment you must refer to the day of judgment, you must not judge of things hidden in darkness, or of the heart of man; ye may judge the works of men, or whatsoever shews it self in the open light.

We read, *Will ye accept his person?* Here two things are to be opened: 1. What it is to accept a person. 2. In what sense the friends of Job might be said to accept the person of God, or how his person may be said to be accepted.

The letter of the Original is, *Will ye accept or lift up his face?* This phrase of *lifting up the face*, hath a threefold different use in Scripture.

1. God is said to *lift up his own face*, and that intimates favour and kindness to man, (*Numb. 6. 26.*) *The Lord lift up his countenance (or face) upon thee, and give thee peace:* That is, the Lord bless thee, and do thee good.

2. Man is said to *lift up his own face*, and that noteth boldness and confidence (*Job 11. 15.*) *Then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot;* that is, thou shalt not be afraid to look any man in the face.

3. Man

3. Man is ſaid to lift up the face of another; either the face of another man, or (as here) of God himſelf: and this ſignifies alwayes extraordinary favour, ſometimes illegal favour. (*Gen. 32. 20.*) Jacob ſends a preſent unto *Eſau*, and ſaith, *Peradventure he will accept, or lift up my face*: So (*Deut. 28. 50.*) the Lord threatneth his ancient people, that he would ſend ſuch enemies among them as *ſhould not regard the perſon* (ſo we tranſlate) or *not lift up the face of the old*: an old man full of gray hairs and venerable gravity ſhall have no more regard then a childe or a beardless boy. *The honourab'e man, is the man eminent in countenance, or whoſe face is lifted up* (*Iſa. 3. 3.*) The Lord threatned that he would make the prieſts contemptible, *becauſe they had been partial in the law*, or *becauſe they had accepted faces in or againſt the law* (*Mal. 2. 9.*) that is, becauſe they had done, or required ſuch and ſuch things to be done, not becauſe the law required them, or becauſe they ſaw it was the will of God in the law, but becauſe they ſaw it was for their own advantage and convenience: They perverted the law, both in opinion and practice, to pinch or favour men as they pleaſed. 'Tis ſaid of the jealous man (*Prov. 6. 35.*) that *he will not regard* (or *not accept the face of*) *any ranſom*, that is, he will not be moved by any gift to ſpare him that hath diſhonoured his bed.

Transfertur ad res inanimatas ut cum quis rem aliquam revereri & permag- ni eſtimare videtur, non tam rei dignitate, quam peculiari aliqua ratione, aut ſpe lucri permotus. Pined.

More diſtinctly, To accept a perſon conſiſts in theſe two things. Firſt, *When to thoſe who are like, we give an unlike judgment.* Secondly, *When to thoſe who are unlike, we give a like judgment*: To do this is to be partial, and to accept perſons in judgment. Liberality or bounty is not obliged to give like to thoſe who are like, but juſtice is. We may give as we will, but we muſt judge by a rule. *God elects according to what is in himſelf, but he judges according to what is in us, or according to what we have done.* When Jacob and *Eſau* were yet unborn, neither having done any good or evil, *God loved Jacob and hated Eſau*; this was not accepting of perſons, becauſe the Lord did this, not as a Judge, but as an Elector; ſo the Apoſtle ſtates it (*Rom. 9. 11, 12, 13.*) He loved the one and hated the other, though both were alike, that his purpoſe according to election might ſtand, not of works, but of him that calleth. *Thus God elects perſons, but he is no reſpecter or accepter of perſons*, for, *In every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteouſneſs is accepted with him*, *Act. 10. 34.* God will not ask any man what countrey-man he is, or of what kindred

Proſopoleſia definitur, ſiquis paribus imparibus, vel imparibus paria tribuat. Coc.

he is, before he accepts him; For the Scripture saith, *whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed, for there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.* (Rom. 10. 11, 12.)

But if this be to accept persons, how could Job charge his friends with accepting the person of God?

For the clearing of this quare, I shall shew first negatively, how we are not to understand it; and then affirmatively, how we are.

First thus, We are not to understand it, as if Job's friends imagined that God had need of their favour in his cause: the usual reason why the persons of men are accepted, is because their cause cannot bear them out; he that hath a good cause never desires to have the sentence carried by any bias to his person; but he that distrusts his cause, useth all the means he can, he turns every stone to ingratiate his person, or, as we say, to curry favour with the Judge. Job and his friends knew well enough that (as the Apostle affirms out of the Psalm, Rom. 3. 4.) *God must be justified in his sayings, and overcome when he either judgeth or is judged:* The justice of his cause will carry him out against all men, *Yea every mouth must be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God.*

Secondly, As God needs not any respect or favour to his person from the creature, so its impossible that God should receive more respect or honour from the creature then doth belong to his person: We may quickly out-act our respects to the best of men, and offer them more then they are fit to receive: but God is infinitely exalted above all our praises, and is fit to receive more then we can offer. The Psalmist indeed saith that the Israelites flattered God. *When he slew them then they sought him, and they returned and enquired early after God: nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues,* (Psal. 78. 36.) But could they flatter God? *Man is flattered, when that is ascribed to him which he hath not, or when he is applauded for what he hath, beyond the worth of it.* God cannot be flattered thus: He is as much beyond flatterings as he is beyond sufferings. The Jews, then, are said to flatter God, not because they applauded him by fair speeches more then was his due, but because by fair speeches they hoped to prevent what themselves did deserve; or they flattered God with their own promises, not with

with his praises. They ſinned againſt him, and he ſlew them, and when the ſword found them they fought God, they creep'd to him and fawn'd upon him, they came as with ropes about their necks, confeſſing they were worthy to dy, yet humbly begging for life; and if God would but ſheath his ſword and ſpare them, O what manner of men would they be in all holy converſation and godlineſs! Thus *they flattered God with their mouth, while their hearts were not right*: they made great ſhews of repentance and turning to God, but they meant no ſuch thing, this was their flattery: neither can the Lord be flattered any other way. And as he cannot be flattered by over-praiſing him, ſo his perſon cannot be accepted by over-reſpecting him.

So then, the meaning of Job in charging his friends with accepting the perſon of God, is only this, that *he conceived his friends ſo zealous in liſting up the glory of God, that they cared not under what temptations and diſadvantages they left him poor man*; they did not attend the law of love and pity towards him, in conjunction with the law of love and honour towards God. As if he had ſaid, *You ſee me miſerable, and you know God is juſt (I know he is ſo too) Hence you infer, God being juſt he would never puniſh me thus if I were not unjuſt. Thus to advance the righteouſneſs of God, you ſuſpect me of wickedneſs: and to maintain his truth, you charge me with falſeneſs of heart and ſecret hypochriſie: The former is your duty, but the later is your ſin; will ye thus reject my perſon that he may accept his?*

Hence Obſerve,

Fiſt, *That to accept perſons in judgment croſſeth the rule of juſtice.*

'Tis injuſtice to accept the perſon of God (in the ſence explained) how much more to accept the perſons of men? The Apoſtle profeſſeth ſtrongly (2 Cor. 5. 16.) *Henceforth know we no man after the fleſh, yea though we have known Chriſt after the fleſh, yet now henceforth know we him no more*, that is, we do not reſpect him for any fleſhly conſideration. That was once our error, we expected a Chriſt in outward pomp and worldly ſplendor, we looked for a Chriſt in robes of royalty, and in the majeſtick ſtate of earthly Princes, we were offended at his meaneſs and poverty, becauſe we ſaw no form or beauty in him; but we have learned to think, and judge otherwiſe of Chriſt. Now, If it be a ſin, or beſides our duty, to reſpect Chriſt after the fleſh,

how much more any Christian? We may argue so here, If it be a sin to accept the person of God, or by inclining to him to wrong men, how much more to accept the person of man, or by inclining to one man to wrong another. *Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: Thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty,* (Lev. 19.15.) As if he had said, ye cannot do that which is right in judgment, if ye respect the person of any man, high or low, rich or poor: some, possibly, may respect the person of the poor (though usually respect of person is given to the rich) but the law of God is so exact in this point, that if a poor man (or a man *in forma pauperis*) contend with, and sue him that is rich, yet, thou shalt not do the rich man wrong and say he is rich, he can bear it well enough, no, but if his cause be right, though his adversary be poor, let the rich man have his due. Magistrates are not called to do acts of charity, but of justice. Laws are made without respect of persons, but they are seldom executed without respect of persons. While the law is moulding and framing, the legislators know not what particular persons shall fall under it, therefore it is made without partiality or respect of persons. But the Judge too often remembers and studies the person as much or more than the law: His friend or his kinsman is in the cause, such a man recommends the business to him, who hath done him a courtesie, or may do it hereafter: Such a great man is concerned in it, who may do him an ill turn, or make an unpleasing representation of him at Court and in the Princes ear. These considerations corrupt the Judge, and turn him aside in judgment.

Secondly, Observe,

We accept the person of God, when under the title of doing him right we wrong man.

Some are zealous for God to the hurt of their brethren: and while they can suppose themselves acting for God, they care not what they act against man. Such a spirit the Prophet describes (Isa. 65.5.) *Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my names sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified:* As if he had said, while you shew hatred towards your brethren, you say it is in love to God, while you cast their persons out of your society, you say it is for the name of God: and that the Lord (say you) may be glorified, we must not spare any man, brother, or friend, one or other. So (Jer. 50.7.) *All that found them have devoured them* (he speaks

speaks of those that went to seek God with their faces towards Zion, who sought to worship God in the exactest manner) *and their adversaries said, we offend not.* (They thought they might eat up a man, with as little offence to God or man, as to their own stomachs, when they had this to say for it;) *Because they have sinned against the Lord, the habitation of justice, even the Lord, the hope of their fathers.* These men have sinned against God, and we hope we must not bear with such: If we did not find them in an error, did they not wrong God and his truth, we would not do thus; but *we offend not, for they have sinned against the Lord, the habitation of justice, even the Lord, the hope of their fathers:* They concluded they might use them as they list when they had this plea, it is for the Lord. That's the reason of Christs premonition (*Joh. 16. 2.*) *They shall cast you out of the synagogues, yea the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doth God service.* 'Tis possible for men to seem inflamed with a zeal for God, while they put their brethren into flames.

And as this is true in regard of the persons of men, so of their doctrine: Some say God is honoured by such an opinion, and therefore it must needs be right. Papists maintain the doctrine of free-will, and tell us it is that God may be glorified, how else (say they) can we answer those exhortations and commands to repent and obey his voice, if man have not free-will or a power to obey? Were it not a mock if God should bid man do that which he cannot do? Therefore that the honour of God may not be stained, the will of man must be advanced.

Arminians hold universal redemption, or that Christ died equally for all men. Now as the Papists pretend zeal for God in maintaining free-will, lest he should seem to mock in his commands; so these maintain universal redemption, lest God should seem to mock in his promises: For, say they, God offers grace and mercy, forgiveness of sins and life eternal unto all; hence they argue, if Christ died not for all, he doth but delude us in making these offers: Thus out of a respect to the person of God, they destroy the truths of God. For the truth is, man hath no free-will (before conversion) either to obey the commands of God, or to believe his promises; and yet the Lord in unspeakable wisdom and justice, yea and in mercy too, commands him to obey, and presents him promises to believe. These administrations of God are not arguments of mans ability, but of his duty; and while God in them

them ſhews man his duty he conveys an ability, he doth not bid a perſon unconverted obey and believe, becauſe he hath an inherent power to do them, but becauſe out of his free love and grace in Chriſt he intends to give him that power. **And therefore the expedient for the removing of the former difficulties, is not to be found in the free-will of man, but in the free-grace of God: who though he requires what we are not able to do, yet enables us to do what he requires.** If we ſeek other helps to eaſe us of theſe ſcruples, we ſhall be convinced at laſt, to have overthrowed the truth of God, while we would be thought zealous for his honour: And that is the ſin of accepting the perſon of God, whom we can never honour enough, either in his perſon, works or truths, *Will ye accept his perſon?*

Will ye contend for God?

It is not a fault but a duty to contend for God, to contend for God with our tongues, and to contend for God with our hands, (*Jud. 5. 23.*) *Meroz was curſed becauſe they came not to the help of the Lord againſt the mighty.* Therefore when he ſaith, *Will ye contend for God?* He doth not blame them for the matter, their taking Gods part, but for the manner in which they did it. As if he had ſaid, *If you will engage as patrons of Gods cauſe, and contend for him, you muſt do it ſo as becomes the cauſe of God, you muſt not, to gratifie God, oppreſs the pooreſt man.*

2. We may give this ſence, *Do ye contend for God?* that is, do ye think God cannot maintain his own cauſe without you? When Gideon had deſtroyed the altar of *Baal*, and *Joſh* his father defended the action, *Joſh* ſaith, *Will ye plead for Baal? will ye ſave him? if he be a God, let him plead for himſelf, becauſe one hath caſt down his altar* (*Judg. 6. 25.*) You need not trouble your ſelves; for if *Baal* be a god he will do well enough, he will ſet himſelf right, and maintain his own divinity. In that ſence alſo *Job* might here ſpeak to his friends, *Will ye contend for God?* Do ye think he is a *Baal*, one that cannot ſave himſelf and manage his own cauſe? doth he need you? he being the true God will plead for himſelf: therefore hold your peace and hear what I have to ſpeak. You have ſpoken wickedly for God, and talked deceitfully for him: you have ſo accepted his perſon and contended for him, that he will give you no thanks for your labour. *Job* yet proceedeth to give ſome further arguments, why they ſhould forbear to ſpeak, and give him further audience.

J O B

JOB Chap. 13. Vers. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13.

Is it good that he should search you out, or as one man mocketh another, do you so mock him?

He will surely reprove you, if you do secretly accept persons. Shall not his excellency make you afraid, and his dread fall upon you?

Your remembrances are like unto ashes, and your bodies to bodies of clay.

Hold your peace, let me alone, that I may speak, and let come on me what will.

JOB still persists pressing his friends to silence, and requiring audience for what he had to speak. The ninth and tenth verses are an appendix to, or an enlargement of his second argument, which began at the sixth verse. There he expostulates, *Will you speak wickedly for God? and talk deceitfully for him? Will ye accept his person? Will ye make such adventures? and run such hazards as these?* Here he dissuades them from it. *Is it good that he should search you out* (vers. 9.) if he do, you will have the worst of it: for, *he will surely reprove you, if ye do secretly accept persons*, vers. 10. If you give wrong judgment for God, you shall not escape the just judgement of God.

His third argument is grounded upon the majesty and greatness of God, vers. 11. *Shall not his excellency make you afraid, &c.*

His fourth, upon their own frailty and weakness, vers. 12. *Your remembrances are like unto ashes*; and will you who are but dust and ashes speak thus not only before, but concerning the high and the holy God?

From all these premises, he draws the wish of the 5th verse, *that you would altogether hold your peace*, into a conclusive charge, at the 13th verse, *Hold your peace, &c.*

Verse 9. *Is it good that he should search you out?*

The fence of this phrase (*is it good?*) was given at the 3^d verse of the tenth chapter. Good is here put for profitable or advantageous.

Some

Some refer it to God, and expound it as if he had said, *Do you think it will be profitable for God to seek after you, to draw you to his party, or to the patronage of his cause? Mistake not your selves, God doth not want your help, he can maintain his cause, though he see not you for his advocates, though he make not you of his counsel.*

But I pass this as too strained an interpretation.

For Job intends this directly to his friends: and while he saith, *is it good that he should search you out?* his meaning is, it will be ill for you. It will be so far from your profit or benefit, from your ease or credit, that you will find it both your loss and your shame, if once God come and search you out. If God look more narrowly into this business, you will get nothing by it but a chiding, as is expressed in the next verse, *He will surely reprove you.*

The word signifies not only to search diligently, but to search judiciously, or as a judge searcheth and tryeth a man or his cause. Job speaks of himself under this language in the exercise of his Magistracy, (chap. 29. 16.) *the cause which I knew not I searched out.* If any, under the law, enticed their brethren to idolatry, saying, *let us serve other gods, then* (saith the Lord by Moses, Deut. 13. 14.) *shalt thou enquire and make search, and ask diligently, &c.* Man searcheth what he doth not know; God knoweth all things and yet he searcheth. He doth not search to inform himself in what he knoweth not, but he searcheth to inform or to assure us that he doth know. David prayeth, *search me, O Lord, and know my heart* (Psal. 139. 23.) yet he confesseth (vers. 1.) *O Lord, thou hast searched me and known me*; yea he knew God knew him without searching. There are no secrets to God: He knows by immediate intuition, not by discourse or inquisition.

So then, Job speaks of God after the manner of men, who make enquiries that they may know, and search that they may find.

But why should it not be good, or what hurt would it be to his friends, if God should search them out? I answer, Job supposed that his friends had not dealt fairly nor sincerely with him; and though he could not find out the unevenness of their spirits towards him, yet God could: He saw perfectly that they did not move upon right principles, that there was more of anger and animosity, then of zeal and charity in their discourse; that they had a desire rather to conquer him, then to comfort him, and that

that they were more buſie in judging his perſon, then in applying remedies to remove his grief. Now, when God upon the ſearch ſhould find out ſuch ill matter as this againſt them, could it be good to them? Surely ſuch a diſcovery as this could not gain them either reward or approbation. *Is it good that he ſhould ſearch you out?*

Hence Obſerve,

First, *God is able to ſearch out and diſcern the hearts and ſecret waies of all the children of men.*

He knows not only what we do, but with what heart and for what ends we do it. *His eyes* (do not only ſee, but) *conſider*, *his eye-lids* (do not only behold, but) *try the children of men*, (*Pſal. 11. 4.*) The eye-lids of man do not ſee at all, they only protect and fence the ſight of the eye: But to ſhew that God is all ſight, and all eye, his very eye-lids are ſaid to do more than ſee, to try the children of men. O Lord (ſaith David, in the place lately cited) *thou haſt ſearched me, and known me.* Man ſearches man and cannot know him, for, *what man knoweth the things of a man, ſave the ſpirit of man that is in him?* (*1 Cor. 2. 11.*) but the Spirit of God knows what is in man, he hath a thread which leads him unerringly, quite through the labyrinth of mans heart. *Thou haſt known me, all over, thou knoweſt my down-ſitting and upriſing*, that is, whatſoever I go about or take in hand: *Yea, thou underſtandeſt my thoughts afar off*; that is, before I think them, or before they are born.

We cannot draw a curtain between God and our ſouls, nor ſpread a vail of ſecrecy over any of our actions. *The waies of a man are before the Lord, and he pondereth (as in a ballance) all his goings*, (*Prov. 5. 21.*)

Secondly, Obſerve,

It will be little to the profit or credit of hypocrites and evil doers, when God comes to ſearch them.

Chriſt quickly eſpied among all his gueſts, the man that had not on him the wedding garment; and as ſoon as Chriſt ſpake to him, he was ſpeechleſs. He was condemned in himſelf, becauſe he had not prepared himſelf.

Three things ariſe from this conſideration, by way of corollary.

First, *Take heed of ſin, for God will ſearch you out.* Moſes tells the two tribes who deſired to take up their inheritance on the

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other

other side *Jordan*, that if they should prove false to their own proposals, their sin would surely find them out. But doth sin make search for the sinner? or will sin discover and betray it self? When he saith their sin would find them out, his meaning is, the revenging hand of God for sin would find them out: When we feel the effects and receive the rewards of sin, our sin finds us. **Many lose both the sight and memory of the sins they have committed, but their sins keep the sight of them, or will follow them (as the hound doth the fleeing game) upon the scent, till they have found them out.**

Secondly, *It is good for man to search himself, before the Lord searches him, or because the Lord will surely search him.* It will be our wisdom to bring our own works to the touchstone, for God will; to travel into our own hearts, and over our own lives, for God will. Let not any region of thy self be (*terra incognita*) an unknown land to thy self, for God walks through thee every day. God threatned to search *Jerusalem* with candles, because they had not searched themselves by the clear sun shine of his word. A sin of ignorance committed is less then a sin against knowledge, but to hide a sin we have committed, or to be wilfully ignorant of it, encreases it.

Lastly, *It is best for us by humble confession to make our sins known to God, seeing God doth search out our sins and will know them, whether we will or no.* Concealment doth not hide the eye of God from sin, but the mercy and pardoning grace of God from the sinner. The disguises which we put upon the evils which we have done, cannot make them less visible to, but more ugly in the sight of God. To assure that, is *Jobs* scope in the next clause of this verse.

Or as one mocketh another, do ye so mock him?

hmm *Proprie est illudere, mentiri, decipere mentiri illudendo, vel illudere menti-endo.*

The word signifies to illude, to ly, to deceive, : to ly that we may deceive, or to deceive by lying. One man, or (as the propriety of the Original sounds) on poor, weak, sorry, sorrowful man may thus mock and deceive another; but can weak, sorry, silly man put cheats and deceits upon the strong, the wise, the only wise God?

But may we conceive that *Jobs* friends had any such design in hand, or that they were contriving a plot against God?

¶ 'Tis equally as vain and sinful to strive with God by our wit,

as it is by our strength, and we can as soon overcome him, as over-
reach him.

Neither did *Job* impute this to his friends, that they set
themselves industriously to deceive or mock God, yet he might
speak thus,

First, Because they handled the cause with weak and improper
arguments, such as had only a shew or reason of divine authority
in them, not the substance or reality of it; which imported, as
if they supposed God himself would be taken with appearances
and veri-similitudes: to be so, is indeed to be mocked and de-
ceived. Upon this account *Job* chargeth them with mocking God.
Neither is it against the laws of disputation to put such inferences
upon anothers assertions or argumentations as may possibly flow
or follow from them, though the arguer be free and far enough
from any such intendment.

*Sape inter
disputandum
spectamus non
quid quisq; sibi
propositum esse
dicat, sed quid
ex ipsius oratio-
ne consequatur.
Merl.*

Secondly, Because they (undertaking to plead the cause of
God) might seem to deal like those Advocates, who to draw
on their clients, and multiply their own fees, tell them their
cause is good and that they doubt not of the day. Which though
it were most true in regard of God and the cause it self he had in
hand with *Job*, yet it was not true in regard of the grounds upon
which his friends managed it, and held it forth.

Thirdly, He might speak thus, because they appearing as wit-
nesses against him before the tribunal of God, might seem to
deal like those witnesses who give a wrong testimony to mislead
the judge, that he may give sentence against the innocent: thus
an earthly Judge may be mocked or deceived. But (saith *Job*)
do you think to mock or deceive God thus? Do you think because you
have given such a hard testimony of me, and say, I am wicked, that
he will take your word, and condemn me upon it? Do ye hope, either
to corrupt and darken his understanding that he cannot see the right,
or to over-persuade his will to act against what he sees, and to over-
throw the right? please not your selves with the mis-representations
of me and my cause to God: for he will quickly look through all
the false colours you have laid upon it, and the fallacies that are in it;
and you will find at last, that you have deceived your selves, not God,
by all your insinuations of my deceit and hypocrisie towards God. As
one man mocketh another, do you so mock him?

*Referendum
videtur ad in-
corruptum Dei
iudicium; quod
depravari de-
torqueriq; a
recto humana
persuasione aut
fraudulentia
non potest. Phil.*

Hence Observe,

First, Man may be mocked and deceived by man.

D d d 2

That's

*Vulgus plerumque
credit omnia
quæ a magnis
hominibus
audiri.*

That's supposed by *Job*, As the strength of man prevails over humane strength; so also doth the wit and understanding of man prevail over humane wit and understanding. And as some men are in reference to strength, so others are in reference to understanding, *children*. You may mock and cozen them, impose upon and delude them, even as if they were a company of little children.

As many wise men are led by the multitude, so the foolish multitude are easily led by any one, who is great in power or eminent in reputation for wisdom. *Two hundred men went after Absalom in their simplicity, and knew not any thing*, (1 Sam. 15. 11.) They were not of his counsel, nor privy to his conspiracy, he deluded them into treason. *Simon Magus bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one, to whom they all gave heed from the least unto the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God* (Act. 8. 9, 10.) But he did but mock them. Such impostors and mountebanks have in all ages put cheats upon simple people, not only in matters of state, but of religion. Popish priests and Jesuites have been greatest designers and actors in soul-mockeries: by these, God hath sent *strong delusions* among them, who have not received the love of the truth, and they have believed lies.

Secondly, Observe,

God cannot be mocked by man.

Gal. 6. 7. *Be not deceived, God is not mocked.* Man never deceives himself so much, as when he thinks or attempts to deceive God. He often takes the wise in their own craftiness, but the craft of the wise never took him. *In vain* (saith Solomon) *is the net spread in the eye or sight of the silly bird*: If a weak man see the snare he will not come into it: There is no snare can be spread out of the eye and sight of God, and therefore he will never come into any snare. And as it is an impossible thing, so also a thing extremely perillous to go about to mock God: so much the Apostle infers from this principle: for he had no sooner laid down my conclusion, *God is not mocked*, but presently he subjoins, *Whatsoever a man soweth, that also shall he reap*. Our actions, good or bad, are like the seed sown, the reward of them is the harvest reaped; such as the seed sown is, such shall the corn reaped be; God will not give them a harvest of wheat and barley, who have sown tares and cockle. Many evil works are rewarded

warded by men with good, and moſt good works are rewarded by men with evil: but God is not unrighteous, either to give us good for evil, or evil for good. For though God beſtows ſome common temporary benefits upon mankind in common, *making his ſun to riſe on the evil and on the good, and ſending rain on the juſt and unjuſt*, Matth. 5. 45. yet he beſtows no ſpecial nor eternal favours upon them; and a time will ſhortly come, when they ſhall not enjoy thoſe which are common, and temporary.

Thirdly, Obſerve,

We may be found mockers and diſhonourers of God, while we think we are ſerving and honouring him.

A good end will not excuſe us while our way is unwarrantable.

Laſtly, Obſerve,

We may be judged to do that which our actions ſpeak, though we be far from ſuch intentions.

Job's friends had no ſuch wicked purpoſe in their hearts as to mock God, yet Job had reaſon to charge them with it.

They, who having been enlightened fall away, are ſaid to cruciſie to themſelves the Son of God afreſh, and put him to open ſhame, (Heb. 6. 4, 5, 6.) *And they who ſin wilfully after they have received the knowledge of the truth, are ſaid to tread under foot the Son of God, and to count the blood of the covenant as an unholy thing* (Heb. 10. 26, 29.) Yet, poſſibly, neither of theſe do it formally and professedly. It is rare to hear of a *Julian* openly blaſpheming the name, and ſpurning againſt the honour of Jeſus Chriſt. Yet in effect, and by way of interpretation they all do it, who depart from the known truth, and give themſelves up (after conviction) to the wayes and luſts of their own hearts.

Job having diſſwaded his friends from accepting the perſon of God, and from ſpeaking wickedly for him, proceeds on to ſhew them the danger of it in caſe they ſhould dare to do ſo.

Verſe 10. *He will ſurely reprove you, if ye do ſecretly accept perſons.*

He will ſurely reprove you.

As if he had ſaid, *You muſt not expect favour at the hands of God if ye accept perſons by ſhewing them unlawful favour: Will not the Judge of all the earth do right?*

He

He will ſurely reprove you.

*Aeguedo
arguet.*

The Hebrew is, *In reprovig he will reprove you.* Which noteth two things. 1. The certainty of the action, and 2. The ſeverity of it. Firſt, *Certainty*, God will do it. We tranſlate: *He will ſurely*, or without doubt he will, there is no queſtion to be made of it, you ſhall be reprov'd. Secondly, *Severity*, In reprovig he will reprove, that is, he will *throngly reprove you*, he will not do it to halves; no, he will rather do it double, as the words are doubled, *in reprovig he will reprove you*; you ſhall have it both ſurely and ſeverely.

Reprove them! for what? He will reprove you for your unjuſt dealing; for your iniquity: the later words of the verſe clear that ſence, *He will reprove you, if you do ſecretly accept perſons*, that is, he will reprove you for accepting perſons. As (*Job. 16.*) the ſpirit is promiſed to come into the world, to reprove or convince the world (that Greek word answers this in the Hebrew) he ſhall come to reprove the world of ſin, convincing them that they have ſinned, and ſhewing them what the deſert of ſin is.

Further, This reprovig may be taken two waies. There is a verbal reproof, and a penal reproof. A reproof by ſpeaking, and a reproof by acting or inflicting puniſhment; both theſe waies we are to underſtand the text, *He will ſurely reprove you*, you ſhall have it both by words and blows.

Job in this ſeems to prophesie: for the event made good what he ſpeaks, as we read in *chap. 42.* of this book, *verſ. 7.* where the Lord, upon the concluſion of this debate, thus beſpeaks the friends of *Job*, *My wrath* (he means *Eliphaz*) *is kindled againſt thee, and againſt thy two friends, for ye have not ſpoken of me the thing that is right, as my ſervant Job hath.* Here is a reproof. *Job*, I ſay, did, as it were, prophesie what would come upon them, that ſurely ſooner or later, God would take them into his hand, and give them a ſound chiding, for their unſound arguing.

Hence Obſerve,

Firſt, *Sinners ſhall not eſcape the reproof of God.*

This reproof (for the clear underſtanding of the point) may be taken two waies.

Firſt, For a ſtop to what they would act: thus he doth very frequently reprove ſinners, ſtaying them from a progreſs in their ſins.

sins. (*Gen. 31.24.42.*) When *Jacob* departed from his Uncle *Laban*; *Laban* pursues him, but the Lord (*ver. 24.*) overtakes *Laban*, and tels him in a dream by night, *Take heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad.* *Jacob* tels him in plain terms, *God rebuked, or reproved thee yesternight* (*ver. 42.*) It is the word in the text: As if he had said, Thou camest forth with a purpose to make me serve thee still, but the Lord hath reproved thee, he hath stopt thee in this design, and forbidden thee to speak either good or bad; that is, that thou speak not any things to me, either by way of threatening or of promise, to draw me back, and bring me to thine house again. We read of this reproof (*Psal. 105. 13, 14, 15.*) *When the people of the Lord were few, and strangers in the land, and did wander up and down from one kingdom to another people, he suffered no man to do them wrong, yea, he reproved kings for their sakes. He reproved kings,* this reproof was a stopping of their intendments, he would not suffer them to wrong his people. When *Israel* was mad in following Idols, the Lord saith, *I will hedge up thy way with thorns, and make a wall that she shall not find her paths,* (*Hos. 2.6.*) It is an allusion to beasts, who are ready to break out of their pastures: the hedge stops or gives a turn. God in pursuance of his covenant, and with a gracious meaning to a revolting people, hedges them up by affliction to stop them from undoing. It is a mercy to be kept out of the pound, though it be by a thorn hedge, sharpest troubles. This stop the Lord doth often give, though he doth not alwaies give it unto sinners: he sometimes lets them run on to fill up their measure of sin, and to receive their full measure of punishment. Reproof for sin is a great favour; though the Lord be angry with us for what we have done, yet it is a favour that he will not let us do more, and so make our selves more vile and miserable.

There is a second way of reproof, which all sinners shall certainly meet with. All sinners are not stopt in their way, but all sinners shall be blamed for going out of the way. Though the fact proceed, yet they shall be convinced, that there is a fault in the fact; and that it is an evil and a bitter thing to sin against the Lord (*Psal. 50. 21.* the hypocrite is described going on in sin, and flattering himself that God was like himself. But what saith the Lord, *I will reprove thee, and set thy sins in order before thine eyes.* Some men are afraid to reprove, many are unable to reprove: or if they be neither afraid nor unable, yet they may be
unwil-

unwilling to be at the pains and trouble of reproof: But the Lord will not forbear his reproof; God is not afraid of any mans great looks, nor doth he want ability to reprove and convince the stoutest sinners. He will convince the whole world, and stop every mouth, he will make every one know what he hath done, and acknowledge that he hath done amiss. Ordinary men, yea Ministers may flatter a people in their sins; and the Lord may leave them to such a judgement, that when they hate those that reprove in the gate, at last they shall have none to reprove in the gate: They shall have none but flatterers, even such as daube with untempered mortar, and few pillows under their elbows, crying peace, peace, where there is no peace; Thus they shall fatten them up with flatteries against the slaughter of the great day; a man's own heart and conscience is not always in a case to reprove him. It is said of *David*, as soon as he had cut off the lap of *Saul's* garment, *his heart smote him*, that is, his conscience reprov'd and checked him; It is a happiness, that when others reprove not, conscience doth: But though conscience fail too, yet God will not, God is greater then our consciences; and when conscience is asleep, God neither slumbreth nor sleepeth, and at last he will awaken conscience too.

So that which way soever we are flattered, whether by men or Satan, or by our own consciences, yet God will surely reprove. Many are upheld by false testimonies in an opinion of their good estate, when as their estate is stark naught: For as there is a threefold testimony for the soul to assure it of a true peace, *The water, the blood, and the spirit*; so in an allusion we may say, that to flatter a man into an unsound peace, there is a threefold testimony, 1. from the world, 2. from Satan, 3. from a man's own heart, these three joyn together to deceive the soul into a most dangerous security; but when they have done their best (which is indeed worst for us) to hide us from our selves, the Lord discovers all; no sinner shall escape his reproof, or if he escape it a while here, it is in judgement, and he shall not escape it when the Lord comes as Judge.

Secondly, Take it for reproof by punishment, and then Note,

That no impenitent sinner shall escape the vengeance of God.

The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men (Rom. 1. 18.) Tribulation and anguish upon

upon every soul of man that doth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile (Rom. 2. 9.) There is a certain decree gone forth, and the word is ratified in heaven, that every sin shall be punished, punished either in the person that doth commit it, or in his surety. The wages of sin is death, and that either the sinner must receive, or Christ, upon whom our sins are laid. *He will surely reprove thee, if, &c.*

Thirdly, Observe,

God will reprove and punish sinners severely; he will do it to purpose when he doth it.

If we come under his hand, we shall feel his hand; if he rebuke us, we shall know he rebukes us; *Thou hast chastised me* (saith Ephraim, Jer. 31.) *and I was chastised.* (Gen. 2. 17.) *In the day thou eatest thereof, dying thou shalt dye* (which we translate) *thou shalt surely dye*; There is a certainty and a severity in it; thou shalt have a through death, death in thy body, and death in thy soul, a temporal death and an eternal death. There is severity to those that continue in their impenitency. Some reprove as if they did not reprove, their reproofs are soothings rather than reprovings. *Eli* did not surely reprove, he in reproof did not reprove; he did rather smooth than rebuke his sons; his words did rather encourage than humble them: If we compare, 1 Sam. 2. 23. with chap. 3. 13. we shall find what account God gave of his reproofs. *Eli* (1 Sam. 2. 23.) comes to his sons and saith; *Why do ye such things? for I hear of your evil doings by all this people.* Nay, my sons, for it is no good report that I hear, ye make the Lords people to transgress: And then telleth them, *If one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him; but if a man sin against the Lord, who shall intreat for him?* Here is a reproof, and, indeed, there is a great deal in it, but it did not come up to the nature of the sin of those men, he should have stormed and thundred upon them, he should have made his sons ears to tingle, and their hearts to tremble; and because he did not, therefore (chap. 3. 13.) the Lord sent a message to him by *Samuel*, *Behold, I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle, &c.* Because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not; or (according to the Hebrew) frowned not upon them. He either smiled or looked too pleasingly upon his sons, when he reproveth them; this caused God to frown upon *Eli*, and brought sore displeasure upon his family. It is good for us

to reprove as God reproveth. Great ſinners muſt have great re-
proofs : Some muſt be ſaved with fear, pulling them out of the
fire ; we muſt caſt them into the fire, that they may eſcape the
fire : Pitiful cruelty is better than cruel pity. Some in dealing
both with the ſinful practices and erroneous opinions of men,
handle them as men handle thorns, as if they durſt not touch
them ; this fatneth ſin, and confirmeth error : For as a cold and
heartleſs petitioner invites a denial, ſo a cold and heartleſs re-
prover heartens the ſinner. The way to cure ſome ſouls is to beat
them black and blew with reproofs, as the word uſed ſomewhere
in the Epiſtles of *Paul* ſignifies. *Paul* exhorts *Titus* to rebuke
the Cretians ſharply (or cuttingly) that they may be ſound in the
faith, (Tit. 1. 13.) Soars muſt be cut and lanced, before they can
be healed. God reproveth ſeverely, as well as certainly. *He will
ſurely reprove you,*

If ye do ſecretly accept perſons.

*etiam ſi clam
perſonam acci-
piatis. Jun.
Si occulte &
per hypocrifi-
ſin, Merc.*

As if he had ſaid, You may cover the matter, and put preten-
ces or colours upon it, but God will find you out. Some tran-
ſlate the Original by *although*, which makes the ſence clearer.
Although ye do accept perſons ſecretly, though ye carry it cunning-
ly or hypocritically : Yet, &c. Many ſin, as it were, by art, and
are ſkilful to do evil : They can draw a fair ſkin over a putrifi-
ed ſoar, and make the blackeſt and moſt deformed actions appear
beautiful : the Pharifees were indeed corrupt and rotten car-
kaſſes, yet they looked like painted tombs ; they were but rotten
poſts, yet they were gilded over. Herein lies the cunning of ſin-
ning, to do it ſecretly.

*certiſſime vos
arguet ſi occul-
te in gratiam
iniuſtiſq; diſcedi-
tis a recto. Tyg.*

Others render this clause cauſally, *He will reprove you becauſe
you do ſecretly accept perſons* : the cloſe carriage and contrivance
of your ſin will cauſe you greater ſhame. *Job* ſpeaks not thus,
as if they ſhould eſcape the reproofs of God who accept perſons
openly : But

Fiſt, Becauſe men ſometimes do it openly and are not re-
proved. As if he had ſaid, you may perhaps do this ſo groſſely,
that every man ſees it, and yet no man reprove or puniſh you for
it ; but though you do it ſecretly, God will reprove and puniſh
you for it.

Secondly, It may have this meaning, If ye do it ſecretly,
men cannot puniſh you ; for they judge and puniſh only thoſe
things

things that appear: Justice must proceed (*secundum allegata & probata*) according to what is alleadged and proved. So that if you secretly accept persons, men cannot deal with you; but God can: he will find you out and make you smart for it.

Hence Observe (I have opened before what it is to accept persons, therefore I shall not stay upon it.)

First, *That to accept persons is a very provoking sin.*

He will surely reprove you, if you do secretly accept persons. The accepting of, or the shewing favour to a person, may be as great a sin as the oppressing of a person. And the reason of it is,

First, Because the oppression of one person is alwaies joyned with the accepting of another: and therefore though the very act of accepting a mans person, or the shewing more favour to a man then is due, may seem to have no fault, or but a small one in it; yet because the favour you shew to one doth redound to the wrong or oppression of another, the sin must needs be exceeding great.

Secondly, It is a provoking sin to accept persons, because it is a sin that cannot be committed but with a great deal of resolvedness and premeditation. A man must know both persons and causes before he can properly be said to accept persons. So that this is not a sin which a man falls into through inadvertency or infirmity: Now, that which puts a great aggravation upon any sin, is, to do it knowingly and premeditately. The more of our understanding or of our will is mixed with any sin, the more sinful it is; I know no sin which hath more of either, then the accepting of persons hath. Therefore God will surely reprove those who accept persons; what sin soever escapeth, that shall not; you cannot plead an excuse for it; nor is there any cloak for this sin. It cannot be committed out of ignorance or infirmity, but upon will and election.

Thirdly, As the accepting of one person is a wrong to another, so it is such a wrong as a man can have no repair for. He that hath the wrong knows not where to go to be righted. The accepting of persons is a sin against all laws, and yet we can hardly find any law against it.

Fourthly, They who sit in judgment personate and represent God himself; and therefore while they accept persons, they make God a partaker, yea, an actor in that which he most hateth.

And as this is a great sin in civil judgement, so in spiritual. This St James shews (*Jam. 2. 2, 3, 4.*) *If there come one into your assembly with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and you have respect to him, and say unto him, sit thou here in a good place; and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment, and you say to the poor, stand thou there, &c. Are ye not then partial in your selves, and are become judges of evil thoughts? We must not have the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons. The Apostles resolve for himself and his fellow Apostles, is (2 Cor. 5. 16.) Henceforth know we no man after the flesh, that is, we accept no mans person, in regard of any outward interest, as to the swaying of our judgement, to think well or ill, highly or meanly of them. External relations and differences must bear no weight at the Gospel beam. It is as dangerous (if not more) to accept persons in spiritual, as in civil judgment, and the Lord is a severe revenger of both.*

But some may say, If it were between man and man, so to accept persons, the Lord might be angry indeed, but will not God favour an accepter of persons, when it is in favour to his own cause? No, he will not. That's the case here, *Will you (saith Job) accept the person of God?*

Hence Observe,

God will not bear it, that we should wrong the meanest man for his sake.

Neither indeed can we do him right by doing injury to others. This doth infinitely advance the holiness and purity of God; and convince the falseness and wickedness of man. The Judges and Magistrates of the earth will do right between man and man, in an ordinary case between subject and subject of equal rank, but if it be the kings case, or if some great person be intresfed in it, how apt are Judges to lean towards greatness, and to give sentence with the prince, though they lay it heavy upon the people! Now if God himself will not endure that any creature should be wronged under a pretence of doing him right: How shall any men be born out, who favour the great ones of the world to the prejudice and undoing of inferiors? The Lord protests (*Isa. 61. 8.*) *I the Lord love judgement, I hate robbery for burnt-offering*: See how he reproves those who were very zealous to promote his cause. But is it blame-worthy to be zealous for God? No, Their zeal was good, but the means they used to express

express it, was evil. They robbed men the better to enable them to bring offerings to God. They oppress their brethren that they might be liberal at the Temple. God testifies against this, *I hate robbery for burnt-offering.* Woe to those who rob men to enrich God. Some now promote preaching, and perhaps will set up a Lecture out of the overplus of their unjust gains. Though it be an excellent work to maintain the preaching of the Gospel, yet their work is bad enough, who gripe and grasp unjustly, and think to salve it by this, they are very liberal toward the promoting of the Gospel, this is to bring robbery for burnt-offering. Others extort and grate in their dealings, who please themselves with a purpose to be charitable to the poor, they will build Almshouses, and give much in their *last wills to good uses*: The Lord hates robbery for charity, as well as for burnt-offerings. He rejects what we give, either to him or to his poor, if we give what we have unduly gotten.

Thirdly, *Job* saith, *He will surely reprove you, if ye secretly accept persons.* Thence Observe,

Secret sins, even heart sins are known unto God.

The Lord by *Nathan* tels *David*, *Thou didst it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the Sun.* Secret sins shall have open punishment, that which is done (whether good or evil) in a corner, God will proclaim upon the house top: Remember this, you that can sin smoothly and fairly, that can (when you have eat up your brethren) like the whore in the Proverbs, *wipe your mouths, and say, we have done no wickedness.*

I grant that in some sence secret sins are not so bad as open sins are: yet there are considerations which render them worse then open sins. Secret sins are not so bad as open sins in two respects. 1. Because they give no scandal to those that are good. 2. Because they do not infect by example, nor encourage those that are evil. Open sins are both scandalous and infectious, secret sins are neither. But if a man sin secretly upon design to hide his sin, or hoping to carry it so that God shall not find him out, this secrecy encreases sin, and shall have the greater condemnation. He that sins openly, appears to men what he is: but he that thus sins secretly thinks that it cannot appear to God what he is, or he hopes that God will never make it appear what he is. This is a great aggravation upon his sin, and therefore *Job* puts a mark upon

upon it, He will surely reprove you, although you, or, if you do secretly accept persons: **Do it as privately as you will, that shall be no excuse to you; though some secrecy may mitigate sin, yet no secrecy can acquit us of sin.**

Job goes on yet to humble his friends, and to shew them their error: he adds two arguments further, in the 11. and 12th verses. The first is taken from the Majesty of God, *Shall not his excellency make you afraid?* And the second is taken from the weakness and frailty of man in general, and of themselves in particular; *Your remembrances are like unto ashes, your bodies to bodies of clay; will you then contend with God? will you sin against him?*

Verse 11. *Shall not his excellency make you afraid, and his dread fall upon you?*

Aliqui ex Hebrais **וַיִּתְּרָם**

flammas exponunt. Annon ejus ignis vos terret?

Statim ut se commoverit, turbabit vos. Vulg.

Commotio ejus versabit vos.

Sept. Elevatio ejus.

Reg. Complut. elevare se idem

est quod surgere

et se ad puniendum accingere; cum punit

Dens dicitur surgere, egredi,

moveri loco suo.

Adventus vel commotio domini

panas instigantis hostium

strepitus comparatur in Scriptura. Merc.

It is quary'd what is here meant by the excellency of God. The Hebrew word is derived from a root which signifieth to lift up. And some of the Jewish Doctors tell us that there is a word of this form, which signifies a fire or a flame; and so the verb *Nasha* signifies sometimes to burn or to consume, as well as to ascend, because the natural tendency of fire is upward, ascending as it burneth. And so they give the sense thus, *Shall not the fire of the Lord make you afraid, shall not the flame of God terrify you?* What flame, what fire? the flame of his anger here, and the fire of his wrath for ever. There is a fire in hell (whether material or metaphorical is not a question for this place.) Shall not that fire of God make sinners afraid? Are you able to dwell with those everlasting burnings, with that consuming fire? The Saints, who are acquitted from their sins, shall dwell with God, who is an everlasting burning: but wicked men, whose sins rest upon them, shall be as the stubble, suddenly burnt, though never consumed.

But I pass that. Another reads it thus, *Shall not he as soon as he moveth himself, make you afraid? When God begins to rise, man must fall:* So the words bear an allusion to Magistrates, who sitting upon the seat of Judicature, when they come to give sentence upon a guilty person, begin to stir themselves, to rise majestically, and to compose their countenances into an aspect of terror and severity. Thus when the Lord begins to stir and move himself, will not you quake? The splendor of Majesty which sits in his face, dazles the eyes, and overcomes the strength both of men and Angels.

Others

Others conceive *Job* referring to that custom of God in those ancient times, when he appeared in a cloud, or by some visible sign, to his servants the Prophets and other holy men: When the Lord did so declare his presence, we find (as it hath been observed in former passages of this book) that the holiest men were surprized with fear, and trembling took hold of them. Hence that humble deprecation of *Job* (chap. 9. 34.) *Let not his fear terrifie me.*

Alludit ad terrorem quem Deus apprensus incutere solebat. Bold.

Further, This stirring up may very well stand with our translation: For the Hebrew, *Nasha*, from whence this word cometh, signifies to lift up, to advance and extol; as it signifies the stirring and moving of a person when he riseth or listeth himself up, so also his dignity or excellency, a civil rising or highness, as well as a local. Dying *Jacob* calls *Reuben*, his first-born, *The excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power.* The privilege of primogeniture was very great. The first-born were as Princes among their brethren: And from this word, a *Duke* or a *Prince* is called *Nashe*, because he is lifted up or exalted above other men. Hence also, in an ill sence, the pride and sinful loftiness of man is often expressed by this word: for pride is the lifting up of our selves above our place and degree: when we in our thoughts rise beyond what we are, or are over-conceited of what we are, this is pride. Thus *Moses* and *Aaron* are falsely taxed (*Numb. 16. 4.*) *Ye take too much upon you, wherefore lift you up your selves above the Congregation of the Lord?* (It is this word) why do you make your selves better than others, or better than you are? Is it not the pride of your spirits? So (*Isa. 14. 13.*) the pride of the Assyrian is described, *Thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God.* He was not so mad as to think that he could literally get up into heaven, or that he could set his throne above the stars; but the phrase noteth out the excessiveness of his pride. He was the highest Monarch on earth, and it was no pride in him to think himself so; (it is not pride for a King to think himself the greatest man in his kingdom, for he is so;) but when he would be higher than man, and do that which exceedeth the state of a creature, here was pride. The excellency of God is that height, dignity, glory and majesty which he hath in himself, above and beyond all creatures. Shall not his excellency

Ista commotio est levatio vel extollentia, quare alij legunt excellentia ejus turbabitur, i. e. statim ut suam majestatem & excellentiam conspiciam fecerit turbabimini. Pined.

נשא Attollere, elevare, unde נשא Significat ducem aut principem, eo quod sit elevatus super alios.

Make you afraid?

נַיִי Pertur-
bat, perturba-
vit.
εὐεθροει ὑμᾶς,
Sep. Torquebit,
vexabit.

The word signifies extream fear, such fear as doth swallow up and amaze. *Psal. 18. 4. The floods of ungodly men, or (nearer the letter) The floods of the sons of belial, that is, the abundant ungodliness of those who are most ungodly, vomiting out reproaches and threatnings upon me, made me afraid. (Hest. 7. 6.) Haman was afraid before the King and the Queen; when Esther told Ahasuerus that he was the man that had conspired against the Jews, he was so afraid that he sunk under his fear. (Isa. 21. 4.) My heart panted, fearfulness affrighted me ('tis this word) the night of my pleasure hath he turned into fear unto me; such a fear siezed upon me as turned all my pleasure into dread and terrour.*

Put all these together, and there are four or five waies in which the sence of this question [*Shall not his excellency make you afraid?*]

Obijcit illis re-
rum adversarum
impatientiam,
semel enim
corrupti à Deo,
constantiam
quam nunc sani
& felices ha-
bere videntur,
amittent. Aquila.

may be made out.
First thus, As if Job did suggest to his friends how suddenly they would discover their own weakness and fearfulness, though they now insulted over him, if the Lord did but appear in his excellency and greatness to them, as he had to him. As if he had said, *You think you shall never be in such a plight as I am, whatsoever God doth with you: But you shall find it otherwise, you will tell me another tale if God do but once shew himself against you, and do with you as he hath done with me: You can now trample upon me, and think I am a man of a very fearful spirit; but if the Lord do but appear in his excellency, your strength will be no more then mine. Shall not his excellency make you afraid, and his dread fall upon you, as it hath done upon me? That's one sence.*

Gravissimum
suis amicis
criminatione
supplicium. Pin.

Secondly, Some conceive that Job doth only threaten his friends with the terrour of the Lord, and with the breakings forth of wrath which they were to expect for what they had done against him. *Shall not his excellency make you afraid? Certainly it shall, that is, the Lords power and greatness will at last make you know that you have handled his cause ill; and done me wrong in handling it.*

Thirdly, *Shall not his excellency make you afraid?* may refer to what he had said before, *You have accepted the person of God,* but should not his excellency make you afraid to do it? Mens greatness may make you willing to flatter them (*few flatter their equals,*

equals, and none will flatter their inferiours) because haply your dependence is upon them, and your expectations from them: but should not the excellency of God make you afraid to flatter him? The excellency of men may provoke you to favour them, and wrong inferiours to serve their turns; but such excellency as is in God should make you forbear to do so. There are two reasons why it should. First, God is above all your flattery and favour, he needs none of your help: great men may have need of lies and flatteries, but God hath none. Secondly, As the Lord is above the flatteries of men, and hath no need of them, so he doth abhor and abominate them. Many men love to be flatter'd, you can do nothing so pleasing to them as that, yea, though you flatter them with the obscuring and dimming of the true lustre of others: but the Lord likes it not. *Should not his excellency make you afraid?*

Fourthly, Others interpret the interrogation affirmatively, *Doth not his greatness make you afraid?* Yes, his greatness doth make you afraid: You fear the greatness of God so much, that you thereupon condemn me: you are so afraid that you should in any thing tax the justice of God, that you must needs tax me for unjust: As if he had said, *Is not this the reason that you deal thus with me? Is it not because the excellency of God doth over-aw you?* *Tenendum quod Job hoc versu non terreat am-* therefore you would rather offend on my part than on his; you would *cos, sed prapo-* be sure (as you hope) not to displease God, what ever becomes of *stere territos,* me: you think (possibly) thus with your selves, If we should speak *metu eminentie,* less for God then is his due, he is so great that he can punish it; but if *vel magnitudi-* we speak less for Job then his due, he is but our equal, what can he *nis Dei, accusat.* do? we need not fear him. Thus many understand the words, *Judicatis secundum personam* not as if Job did threaten his friends with, but as if he only told *potiorem non ex-* them that they were overmuch afraid of the dignity and excellency of God, and thereupon were weighed down in their judgments to speak they cared not how hardly of him. *perspectione causæ. Id.*

Fifthly, *Shall not his excellency make you afraid?* that is, his excellency ought to make you afraid (*Malac. 1. 6.*) *A son honour-* eth his father, that is, a son ought to honour his father, it is the duty of a son to honour his father. So here, *Shall not his excellency make you afraid?* that is, his excellency ought to make you afraid. It is a due and an equal thing that you should be so kept in awe by the majesty of God, that you should not speak or do any thing to the prejudice of man. *Should not his excellency make you afraid?*

Observe from it,

First, That the Lord hath an excellency in him.

Excellency is an excess in any quality, or a gradual heightning of any thing or person above another. We are to consider this that we may give God glory, and praise him (as the Psalmist speaketh) according to his excellent greatness. God hath an excess of goodness in him; not an excess, as excess notes superfluity or more than needeth, but an excess, as it notes more than is in any other besides himself. The excellency of God may be considered two waies, 1. absolutely, as it is an excellency in himself, 2. comparatively, to all other excellencies. God is excellent beyond compare; they who have an excellency, have none like unto Gods, or none at all compared with God. The Prophet tels us, that the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance, yea, all nations are before him as nothing, and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity, Isa. 40. 15, 17. Besides, the greatest excellency of man is a fading excellency (Job 4. 11. Doth not their excellency which is in them go away? Men go away not only as they are poor and mean, but as cloathed with excellency, whether outward excellency or inward excellency: the beauty of the body, learning, wisdom, eloquence, the endowments and riches of the mind, all these excellencies which are in them go away; Journeyeth it not with them (when they make their journey out of the world?) as Mr. Broughton reads that place. And as the excellency of all men (I mean their worldly excellency) shall go away, so especially shall the excellency of the hypocrite (Job 20. 6) Though his excellency mount up to the heavens, and his head reach unto the clouds, yet he shall perish for ever. Hypocrites make a great shew, they have not only the profession of religion, but often the beauty of religion shining upon them, there is a verdure and flourishing greenness upon their ways to the view of man: but though their excellency mount up to the heavens, yet down they shall, they shall lye down, and everlasting contempt shall cover them.

Further, We may open the excellency of God under a three-fold notion.

1. There is an excellency of his Being.
2. Of his Attributes.
3. Of his Works.

In all these we should acquaint our selves with his excellency.

First,

First, There is an excellency in the Being of God ; creatures have a being, but not such a being as God hath. For,

1. The Being of God is of himself. All creatures have their being of him and from him. Creatures have a derivative being ; God is *Original Being, the first Being.* Here is the excellency of his Being. It is said (*Habak. 1. 7.*) of the *Chaldeans, that their judgement and their dignity, or (it is the word of the text) their excellency shall proceed of themselves.* But is any man the fountain of his own happiness, excellency or greatness? Can it be said of any in the world that his excellency shall proceed of himself? In one respect the excellency of some doth : In another respect it doth not, it cannot. It cannot be said of any excellency in creatures, strictly, that it proceedeth from themselves, all comes from God. But take a creature in its reference to any, or all other creatures, and so the excellency of some proceedeth from themselves, and not from other creatures. Such is the meaning of that place, *Their judgement and their excellency shall proceed of themselves,* that is, they shall not depend upon other persons or nations, they shall not impe out their wings with other mens feathers, nor shall they shine with a borrowed glory. Some Kingdoms do glorious things, but their glory proceeds from neighbouring assistances. But the *Chaldean* needed not to confederate with any. Thus a creatures excellency may proceed from himself, not from other creatures, but all proceeds from God : and the excellency only of God in his Being is from himself alone, independent upon the creature.

2. *God's Being is to himself as well as from himself ;* and thus also he excelleth man, whose being is not to himself, but to another ; for all things are and were created unto God. No creature was made to it self. *The dignity of God is to himself alone: he indeed doth give out himself voluntarily, and so his Being is for the good of others, but he hath this prerogative, to keep all his Being to himself :* As it is the holiness of man to put forth his being for God, so it is the holiness of God that his Being is for himself ; he doth and may do all things for his own glory, as man ought to do all for the glory of God.

3. *God's Being is an unchangeable Being : Man is in motion every day, either in his increase, or in his decrease ; he is either growing, or he is decaying, both in his natural and civil state. Man hath no consistency, while he is he continueth not what he*

was. Man is a shadow, he is alwayes turning, but with God there is no variableness nor shadow of turning. The Psalmist sets out this opposition between God and creatures (Psalm 106. 26, 27.) *They shall perish, but thou shalt endure, yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment, as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed, but thou Lord art the same, and thy years shall have no end.*

4. Man's being in this life, it is not only changeable, but determinable. God is an eternal Being, he is from everlasting to everlasting. We are short-breathed, short-lived creatures, if we number three or fourscore years, we are counted wondrous old; and when we have numbered all our years they are no number at all to the years of God.

5. Man's being is but a particular being: the Being of God is an universal Being; he is a Being in all things, and yet not included in any, a Being without all things, and yet not excluded from any.

6. Man's being is such as man may comprehend; one man can measure another. No man hath any such excellency in him, but another may be found to take the length, and breadth, and depth of it, even all its dimensions. But Gods Being is an incomprehensible Being, there is no measuring, either of his nature, of his counsels, or of his wayes.

7. The Being of God is an absolute perfect Being. Man's being is respective and imperfect; though it be perfect in its kind, as such a creature, yet it is not perfect in all kinds: Somewhat may be taken from man and added to him, and he a man still; but *God is so perfect that nothing can be added to or taken from him, all things are laid up in him: He is the sum and comprehension of all those excellencies which are scattered in the creature, and he infinitely excels them all.*

The result of all these is excellency. God hath not only a being as we have, but an excellency, a glory in his Being above all other beings: the being of the creature is no being, we are but *Non entities* compared with God. *I am that I am*, is his stile. God is the highest Entity, the Entity of all Entities.

Secondly, the excellency of God appears through all his Attributes.

Man is wise. There are many wise men in the world: But is man wise as God? The wisdom of man is foolishness to God, and

and the fooliſhneſs of God is wiſer than men.

Man hath knowledge, but doth man know as God? Man knoweth not as God knoweth, if we conſider either the matter or manner of knowledge. Man knoweth but ſome parts and pieces of things; God knoweth all things: **Man knoweth but in part, God knoweth fully: Man knoweth one thing by another, he muſt beat out his way by argument, and know by demonstration, deſcending ſometimes from the cauſe to the effect, aſcending at other times from the effect to the cauſe:** But God knoweth all things in themſelves; He knows by immediate intuition: He ſeeth cauſes in themſelves, not by their effects, and he ſeeth the effects in themſelves and not from their cauſes.

Man is juſt. There are juſt men: But is any man juſt as God? Oh the exactneſs of the juſtice of God! There is no errour in his judgment, he will give to every man according to his work. Where's the man that gives to any man according to his works?

Man is merciful: but is he merciful as God? Hath man ſuch a ſtock of mercy as he? Hath man mercy for ever? Hath man multitudes of mercies? **Mans mercies are cruelties compared with the mercies of God.**

Man is patient: but is he patient as God? if God had no more patience than man, or then all men and Angels too, his patience would be ſpent out in one day, it would not laſt one hour, amongſt ſo many ſinnings and provocations, among ſinnings after ſo many warnings.

Man hath love: but doth he love as God loveth? ſo freely? ſo fully? ſo conſtantly? ſo without ends and deſigns upon thoſe he loves? **Our love is hatred compared with the love of God.**

What ſhould I ſay of the power, of the holineſs, of the faithfullneſs, of the bounty of God? What of every thing that is attributed unto God? he is ſo excellent in every one, that he is all excellency.

Thirdly, There is an excellency in the works of God; what God is in Being, the ſame he is in working. He is (*Iſa. 28. 29.*) *Wonderful in counſel, and excellent in working.* **Excellent in working, becauſe excellent in being.** *Exod. 15. 7. In the greatneſs of thine excellency thou haſt overthrown them that roſe up againſt thee. (Deut. 33. 26.) There is none like the God of Jeſurun*

(that

(that is, the God of Israel) who rideth upon the heaven to thy help, and in his excellency on the skie? God is said to ride to the help of his people, because he helps them speedily; and he rideth in his excellency, that he may shew his state and magnificence when he comes to help them. When God works in his excellency, we shall see the excellencies of God imprinted upon his works. Hast thou an arm like God? saith Elihu to Job, or canst thou thunder with a voice like him? Canst thou teach like God? (saith he also) We may say to the worker, Canst thou work like God? to the teacher, Canst thou teach like God? to the souldier, Canst thou fight like God? Now, as there is an excellency in the Being, Attributes and Works of God, so this his excellency should strongly affect and over-aw our hearts: Should not his excellency make you afraid?

Hence Observe,

The excellency of God should keep men in a holy compoſure of spirit, in a holy care to please him, in a holy fear of offending him.

What? before the excellency of God, before a God so excellent in Being, so excellent in the manner of his Being, so excellent in working, and we walk loosely and carelessly? Let this excellency of his make us afraid. The Lord most high is terrible, (Psal. 47. 2.) he is terrible because so high. The Preacher in his description of old men, saith, They shall be afraid of that which is high (Ecclef. 12. 5.) Old age loves to keep upon even ground, for fear of falling: But the youngest and stoutest of men, they who are most ambitious of clambring unto high places, have cause to be afraid of the most high God, and when he discovers his highness they will be afraid. Men never fear that which is but equal to them, and until they conceive an excellency in God, they never fear him. David prayeth that God would be pleased to shew his excellency, his greatness and his highness to his enemies (Psal. 8. 6.) Arise, O Lord, in thine anger, lift up thy self because of the rage of mine enemies, for their sakes return thou on high. Why would he have God to lift up himself, and to return on high? The Lord is ever on high: The meaning is, Do thou declare thy self to be on high, let thy excellency appear above all. Why? What will be the effect of this? So (saith he) shall the congregation of the people compass thee about; that is, they shall crouch and fall down before thee when thou appearest in thy highness. When Christ appeared in his highness, though but as a Lamb,

Lamb, upon his throne, all the congregation did compass him about, terrour and astonishment surprized them all: The kings of the earth, and the chief captains, called to the mountains and rocks to fall on them, to hide them from the face of him that sat on the throne, *Rev. 6. 16.*

The *Chaldee Paraphrast* glosseth this text of *Job*, *Shall ye not be afraid when the Lord is lifted up, or set upon his throne of judgement?* *They who now slight the Lord, shall then tremble at the Lord, and before the presence of his Majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth.* *Nonne quum erigetur ipse super solium iudicii, &c. Tar.*

Lastly, Forasmuch as *Job* having charged his friends with accepting the person of God, and with speaking falsely in favour of him, subjoins in this verse, *Shall not his excellency make you afraid?* Observe,

That all our undue speakings and actings for, or in the cause of God, arise from our undue apprehensions of God.

We conceive of God after the rate and proportion of a man, and measure him by our own span. Hence it is that many instead of adoring and fearing God, do indeed but play with him, and take the liberty of an ungovern'd boldness, both concerning his counsels and his judgements. What becomes of the excellency of God, when he is drawn down to the reason, and narrow'd, or rather nothing'd into the capacities of a creature? *We never abase our selves as we ought, nor keep our distance till we are rapt into the meditation of his divine excellencies and perfections.* When *David* puts those humbling, emptying questions (*Psal. 8. 4.*) *What is man that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man that thou visitest him?* When he (I say) puts these questions, see where his heart was (*vers. 9.*) *O Lord our God, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!* When he thought of the excellency of *Gods name*, he did not think himself worth the naming, *What is man?* while he thought who God was, he did not think himself worthy of one of Gods thoughts, *What is man that thou art mindful of him?* The Angels cover their faces before God, they adore, but they cannot bear his glory. They that know God, fear him, and they who know him most (so do Angels) fear him most. The more excellent any creature is, the more he fears the excellency of the Creator. *Shall not his excellency make you afraid?*

And

And his dread fall upon you?

His dread] The words bear the same sence with the former, therefore I shall not stay upon them. *His dread*: The Original *פֶּחַח* *pavor*, *timor*, *ad me-* imports a fear rising from some outward cause. Divine fear is *timor ab externa* caused three wayes; First, by the rule or precept of the law. *vi aut authori-* Secondly, By the penalty or threatnings of the law. Thirdly, By *tate incussum* those judgments which are inflicted for the transgression of the law. We may understand the text of fear, by all these. *Shall not his dread*, the dread of the precept, which is so holy: the dread of the threatning, which is so terrible: the dread of the judgments of God, which are so exemplary, *fall upon you?*

Fall upon you?

The dread of God is from above, as lodged on high, and so comes down (as it were) with an advantage upon transgressors (*Rev. 11. 11.*) It is said that when ten parts of the city fell, *fear fell upon the rest*. Fear fell upon them, as a stone from an high tower, and crushed their spirits. The Apostle speaks this notion, *Rom. 1. 18.* *The wrath of God is revealed from heaven.* As if heaven did open to let his wrath down, or to discharge it like a thunderbolt upon unrighteous men. The Spaniards have a proverb (which an interpreter remembreth upon this place) *God hath the hill and the stones*, which is as much as to say, *God hath the upper ground of all creatures*, and his wrath falls upon them as stones from an high place. We may contend with angry men upon even ground, creature with creature, but God hath the upper ground of all creatures, his wrath falls upon us. He hath the hill, yea, he hath the wind and the sun of us, he hath all advantages on his side, there is no standing out against him.

Hence Note,

First, *God is to be dreaded.*

To be dreaded in the justice of his law, in the severity of his threatning, in the greatness of his judgements; from each of these dread falls like a mighty millstone upon the heads of unbelievers and obdurate sinners. Justice appears with open face in the law, threatnings lie virtually in the law: judgements are seemingly in the threatnings, and threatnings are visibly in judgements. God is to be dreaded, when we hear the rule of the law; he is to be feared more, when we hear the threatnings of the law; he

Semper ex sub-
limi loco pug-
nare adversus
mortales Deus
dicitur; quod in
Hispanorum
proverbio est:
Ipsi & mons
& lapides sunt.
Pined.

he is to be feared most, when we hear or see those threatnings executed in judgements. *The man* (saith *Moses*, Deut. 17, 12, 13.) *that doth presumptuously* (by sinning against the rule of the law) *shall dye* (by suffering the penalty of the law) *and all the people shall hear and fear, and do no more presumptuously.*

Secondly, Observe,

The dread of God shall certainly fall upon sinners.

As it noteth a duty, that we should dread God, so an event that such as continue in sin, the dread of God will fall upon them.

The dread of God will surely take hold of sinners, unless they get Christ to be their Saviour: No fence against the dread of God but Christ. For as one Scripture saith, *The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness*: So, another saith, *He is Jesus that delivereth us from the wrath to come.* There is no wrath escaping, but by a Mediator.

Verse 12. *Your remembrances are like unto ashes, and your bodies of clay.*

This verse is an Antithesis to the words before. *Job* having perswaded his friends to silence, and to desist their unfriendly carriage towards him, by an argument taken from the excellency of God; now moveth them by an argument from their own weakness and infirmity; *Shall not his excellency make you afraid? and his dread fall upon you?* vers. 11. There he tells them who God is, and that they ought to stand in awe of him. Here in this 12th he tells them what they are, and how they ought to be abased in the sense of their own frailty; *Your remembrances are like unto ashes, your bodies to bodies of clay.* Hold your peace, &c. Will you, who are clay and ashes, stand it out against his excellency?

Your remembrances are like unto ashes.

The letter of the Hebrew is, *Your remembrances are parables of ashes, or have the similitude and likeness of ashes in them.*

There is much variety of opinion about the meaning of those words. Some expound them as a threatening against his friends: *Your remembrances are like unto ashes*, that is, your remembrances shall be brought to ashes, or, you shall be made like unto ashes. To bring one to ashes, is an effect of wrath, the fire of

תִּנּוּן חֲשָׁמַיִם
Memoriae ve-
stra parabola
cineris. Mon.
Instar cineris.
Pagn.

Gods wrath quickly consumes man to ashes. Ashes are a sign and a monument of extreamest anger. So the Apostle Peter speaks of *Sodom and Gomorrah*, in his second Epistle, chap. 2. 6. Where proposing Gods judgement upon those cities, he saith, *And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly.* And the Apostle Jude describing the destruction of the same cities, saith, *They suffered the vengeance of eternal fire:* they were turned into ashes for ever: For as if that fire burned, or were not quenched unto this day; he calls it an *eternal fire*: or the reason may be, because they went from one fire to another, from the fire which God rained down from heaven, to the fire which he had prepared for the ungodly in hell: Historians speak of the marks of this vengeance of God upon *Sodom and Gomorrah* as still remaining. Some call that place *The Region of ashes*. And *Josephus* reports it as the tradition of those times, that the apples of *Sodom* were fair and pleasant to the eye, as if fit to be eaten, but as soon as they were touched, they turned to ashes. Some Interpreters (I conceive *Job* hinting that judgement of God upon *Sodom and Gomorrah*, thereby admonishing his friends, that as God turned those cities into ashes, so if they should provoke his excellency, he could quickly deal with them, and make them an everlasting argument of his displeasure. Though I stay not upon this Exposition.

Yet because it contains a general truth, take one Note from it.

That, if God be provoked he can soon turn all into ashes, weaken the strength, and blast the beauty of man.

As the Lord speaks to *Abimelech*, Gen. 20. 3. *Thou art but a dead man, because of the woman which thou hast taken, for she is a mans wife:* As if he should say, I can quickly destroy thee, turn thee into the grave, tumble thee into the earth, though thou art a king, and a great one. The *Roman History* speaks of *Cesar*, that when *Metellus* the Tribune controlled his orders about the publique Treasure; *Be quiet* (saith he) *lest I lay thee dead in the place;* yet correcting himself, he added, *Young man, it is harder for me to speak it, than to do it;* which he spake to mollifie the sharpness of his speech, as not proceeding from his nature, but his passion, and as being grieved at the harshness of his own language. If the

Invenitur regio cineris, Paul. Orosius. l. 1. c. 5. Qui colore quidem sunt edulibus similes carpentium, verò manibus in funum dissolvuntur & cinerem; Joseph. de bello Judaic. l. 5. c. 5.

the kings and potentates of the earth speak at such a rate, that they can easier destroy men, then say they will destroy, how much more may God? This is really true of him who is the only Potentate, the Lord of heaven and earth, that it is as easie for him to destroy persons and nations, and to make their remembrance to be as ashes, as it is for him to say he will.

Some others speak higher^a, and interpret this text, as they say probably, of eternal fire: as if Job had threatned his friends with damnation. *Shall not his excellency make you afraid? Your remembrances are like unto ashes*, you shall be turned into hell, and sent to everlasting destruction. But I approve this less then the former. Job was displeased with his friends for their opinions concerning him: yet doubtless he had a better opinion of them then to judge them under such a displeasure of God.

Thirdly, *Your remembrances* is expounded actively thus, *the things which you remember*^b, the reasonings, objections and records which you have brought out of the storehouse of your memories against me, and would have remembred, are like unto ashes, utterly extinct and easily blown away. The word Remembrance, is used in that sence (*Exod. 17. 14.*) Where Moses is commanded to write a memorial against Amalek, that is, to record somewhat as a remembrance against them: Records, and the officer that keeps records, are both expressed by this word, because they preserve the remembrances of what is past.

Though this hath a fair sence, yet it seemeth not to be so clear to the connection of these words, therefore I rather insist upon a fourth interpretation^c, taking this remembrance more generally for any thing which is memorable in man; as riches, dignity, power, credit, learning, wisdom. As if Job had said, *These things by which you hope to be remembred, and become famous in the world, are but ashes*; that is, mean, and of no consistence. (*Prov. 10. 7.*) *The memory of the just is blessed, but the name of the wicked shall rot.* The memory, that is, when persons living in after ages shall remember the just, they will bless them and highly esteem them, but the name and credit of wicked men shall consume as a rotten thing to nothing.

Taking their remembrance for that which was most memorable in them, we may observe,

That the best things, those things which are most remarkable

a *Fo. tē etiam extremum Gehenna supplicium cineris nomine proponitur, vel significat mortem ignobilem.*

Pined.
b *Sententiam hanc, & ex cinere ductam similitudinem ad ipsas responsiones & argumenta amicorum refert; q. d. responsiones vestrae pereunt & collabuntur.* Var. uade

מזכירי
Mazchirim dicebantur illi qui erant a commentariis, quibus negotia scriptis mandabant. Liber Zichinoth i. e. memoriarum.

Est. 6. 1.
c *At cinis est quicquid tandem turgetis amici. Met. Poet. Memoria vestra i. e. quicquid in vobis memorabile est, ut opes, dignitas, fama, splendor & vita, nihil aliud est quam cinis, omnia in cinem & nihilum redeunda ut tena, &c.* Me-
and
re.

and memorable in man, are but vain, and ſubject to a ſudden decay.

What men lay by, and eſteem as a monument to poſterity, or as a memorial to preſerve their names to all generations; how often is it ſcattered like aſhes in the air, all ſpilt like water upon the ground, which cannot be gathered up? Men for their remembrance uſe to ſet up the moſt laſting materials; pillars of marble, or Pyramids of ſtone. It is ſaid of *Absalom*, that he in his lifetime had taken and reared up for himſelf a pillar, and he called it after his own name, becauſe he had no ſon to keep his name in remembrance: Yet that remembrance of his proved like aſhes, and ſo will all that, whatſoever it is, which vain men frame or fancy to themſelves to make them memorable and renowned among poſterity or ſucceeding ages. Your remembrances are like unto aſhes; which will receive a clearer evidence when I have a little opened the later clauſe of this verſe.

גב Proprie fig.

Superiorem partem & prominentem, unde vox latina gibbus credenda eſt fluxiſſe. Rab. Mardoc.

Gabba hi eſt ſuggeſtum eminens lapidibus ſtratim.

Vult quicquid in ipſis poſſimum eminet eſſe cumulum luti. Merl. Et tumulus luti altiora veſtra, Iun.

Cognata voce ſaltus & arrogantia vocatur in Scriptura Ghobah גבב unde a Kimehi exponitur omnis altitudo & eminentia.

And your bodies to bodies of clay.

That is, As aſhes are a fit parable or ſimilitude to ſhadow out all the permanency or excellency of your remembrances, ſo a body, or a heap of clay, is a ſufficient parable or ſimilitude of all the value and dignity of your bodies.

Your bodies.

The word (*Gab*) which we tranſlate *body*, ſignifies any thing which is high, lifted up and eminent, or the upper and ſuperiour part of any thing. It is ſaid (*Joh. 19. 13.*) that *Pilate* ſate down in the judgement-ſeat, in a place that is called in the Hebrew *Gabbatha*. Seats of judgment are erected and ſet up in eminent places, that ſo the Judge may be in the peoples view. According to which acception of the word, the meaning riſes thus; That which is higheſt in you, your greateſt elevations, are like to a lump of clay. And ſo the oppoſition ſtands fair between this and the former verſe; there *Job* tels his friends, that the excellency of God may juſtly make them afraid. But what is your excellency? As your remembrances, or whatſoever is moſt memorable in you, are like unto aſhes; ſo all your excellencies, compared with the excellency of God, are but like a clod of clay.

Hence Obſerve,

That which is moſt high and excellent in man, compared with the

the excellency of God, is but like to dirt or clay.

All the dignities and eminencies of man are but fit to be swept to the dunghill, when God is named. When *Abraham*, a prince, and a great one too, stood before the Lord, he hath no valuation for himself, but by *dust and ashes*, Gen. 18.27. **We cannot but have low thoughts of our selves (what worldly and carnal heights so ever we are in) when we truly remember the high God. There are three things upon which many men raise themselves very high, even to think themselves like the most High, as it is said of Lucifer.** First, Their riches; Riches are not only a strong, but a high tower; this eminency is most like to clay, yea, it is an eminency in clay, or *thick clay*, as the Prophet speaketh (*Hab. 2.*) Secondly, **Men think themselves very high if they get upon the pinnacle of honour; from this height they look down upon, and despise all as underlings; yet this is but like clay too; how often have the greatest earthly honours been laid in the dust? Thirdly, Others are lifted up with their natural wisdom, their learning, parts and gifts.** They who contemn riches and honour, are yet puffed up with a conceit of their inward endowments: yet as God will destroy all the wisdom of this world, so the wisdom of the best men in the world is foolishness compared to God. If some one creature hath such an excelling excellency, that other excellent creatures (as the stars to the sun) have no excellency in the presence of it, how much more are all created excellencies swallowed up at the thought of that excellency which is in God? must not all go for clay and ashes, when we have once mentioned him?

Further, The word signifies also the bosses of a buckler (*Job 15. 27.*) because bosses are the most eminent part of a buckler, being set out for the ornament of it. Thus some translate it here, *The bosses of your bucklers, or, your bucklers are like bucklers of clay.* But what was the buckler of *Jobs* friends? their buckler was their arguments and their reasons, which they urged against *Job*. Arguments are amongst Disputants, their weapons, their sword and buckler. The third interpretation of the former clause, and this, comply fairly, *Your remembrances*, that is, the things you have remembered to or against me, are like unto ashes; and *Your bucklers*, that is, **your arguments and objections are like unto clay, weak and poor, however you think they are strong, impregnable and unanswerable.** The Apostle useth a similitude

which Bez.

Quicquid in vobis est maxime memorabile et alium si cum Deo comparabitur nihil est.

Jun. Eminentie vestrae dignae sunt, quae ad quiliarium & luti cumulos propiciantur.

Gab est extantia clypei. Umbones vestri vestra sunt. Isti quae vos ut diligenter observata commemoratis, & in me tanquam certa quedam axiomata delictis, non sunt solidiora quam cinis, & lutea propugna cula.

which may give some light to this (1 Cor. 3. 12.) where he compares sound doctrine to gold, silver, precious stones, but corrupt doctrine, to wood, hay, stubble.

*Et corpora ve-
stra corporibus
luteis, i. e.
aceruis luteis.
Redigentur in
lutum cervices
vestri. Vulg.*

Thirdly, We translate. *Your bodies*, so the word signifies by a Trope, because the body of man stands upright, and is lifted up: Man goeth not groveling upon or toward the ground, as a beast goeth, but he hath no erect figure and form, therefore his body is called *Gab*, that is, *lifted*, or *raised up*. Others render it by a part of the body, the *back*, or the *neck*: So the Vulgar, *Your necks which are lifted up, shall be brought down to the clay*. But I rather keep to our rendring of the word, by the whole body, then by a part or member of it; As if Job had said, *Your bodies, which in regard of the figure and frame of them are lifted up, as if they did scorn the earth, are yet but pieces of earth and clods of clay; you trample upon earth and clay, as things below you, yet you are no better than the things you trample upon, even earth and clay: and to them these bodies of yours must shortly be reduced and resolved into as their first principles, though now you look big upon me, and carry it high.*

Hence Observe,

First, *The body of man, how strong, how beautiful soever, is but a piece of earth and clay.*

First, It is clay, in regard of the baseness and meanness of it; earth is the meanest of the elements, the lowest and worst of all, so is the body the meanest part of man.

Secondly; It is clay, in regard of the brittleness of it, it breaks quickly like a Potters vessel.

But it may be said, why doth Job speak thus to his friends? Why doth he tell them that their bodies are bodies of clay? Did not they know that before? Need any man be told that his body is formed out of the earth, and that it turneth to the earth again? Especially, needed these friends of Job, who were men of such knowledge and wisdom, yea, of holiness too, needed they to be taught that their bodies were bodies of clay?

I answer, We may know many things which we are not affected with. There is a two-fold knowledge of things: There is a knowing of things in the notion, or a speculative knowledge, and there is a knowing of things in the application, or a practical knowledge of them. Doubtless they knew this speculatively, but Job thought they did not know it practically. They would never

never (as he supposed) have been so stiff towards him if they had remembred that themselves were clay. A man hath some knowledge wherein he differeth little from a beast, which hath no knowledge. The Prophet teacheth this for truth (*Jer. 10. 14.*) *Every man is brutish in his knowledge.* A strange speech; it might rather be said, that *every man is brutish in his ignorance*; though a beast cannot properly be called ignorant, yet a beast hath no knowledge: How is it then that he saith, every man is brutish in his knowledge? It is because, though every man knows that which a beast cannot, yet he doth not make that improvement of it which a man (especially which a Saint) should and might. This is a kind of brutishness in knowledge: And when he saith, *Every man is brutish in his knowledge*; it is a very large word, for are godly men brutish in their knowledge? surely no; then every man here, is every wicked man, and all such are brutish in their knowledge. Though a wicked man knoweth that his body is a body of clay, though he knoweth there is a God, and a Christ; and if you speak to him of these things, he will say, *he knows them as well as you*, yet he is brutish in the knowledge he hath of them all. Every wicked man is so; yea, in every thing he knoweth and doth, he is brutish. I conceive also that place of the Prophet may take in godly men, in a mitigated sence, even they are brutish in their knowledge; Why? because they do not improve their knowledge to that height which they might, they do not that good, nor raise that glory to God by their knowledge, which the talents they are entrusted with, call for. The Apostle Jude concludes of wicked men, *That which they know naturally, in that like brute beasts they corrupt themselves*: and I may say, what the Saints know spiritually, if they corrupt themselves, or are corrupted in any of that knowledge, so far they know but like brute beasts: Therefore though this is a common lesson, yet it is but need to press it upon all, as Job here doth: *It is not without cause that men are told that their bodies are bodies of clay. It is no easie matter to know our selves in those things which are easily known.* It is a good determination which one hath made concerning knowledge: First, *He that knoweth not what he should, is a beast among men.* Secondly, *He that knoweth no more then needs must, is a man among beasts.* Thirdly, *He that knoweth all that he may know, is a God among men*: The third must be taken thus: *He that knoweth all objects knowable*.

knowable within the compaſs of man; and he that beateth out the knowledge of thoſe objects to the full, making the high-eſt improvement of them, this man is as a God amongſt men: and he may well be called ſo, ſeeing there are very few who ever arrived to this height about any one object of knowledge, and (I believe) never any one attained it in reference unto all.

Now while we find *Job* teaching this plain piece of knowledge, that *our bodies are bodies of clay*, it teacheth us three Leſſons,

First, *That man is a proud piece of fleſh, and therefore hath need to be told that he is but clay.*

Secondly, *That pride ariſeth either from ignorance, or forgetfulneſs of what we are.*

David deſired the Lord to teach him how frail he was, *Pſal.* 39. Though *David* was a very holy and a knowing man, yet he knew not that plain point. Some think it ſo common a truth that no man needs to be taught that *man is mortal*. One great reaſon why immortality is ſo little looked after, is becauſe our mortality is ſo little looked into. We know little either of the power of God, or of the weakneſs of man; and many who have ſome knowledge of theſe cannot be ſaid to make any uſe of them: their knowledge lies mouldring by the walls, they do not act the things they know; ſuch knowledge leaveth a man in a worſe condition than ignorance doth. Beſides, a man that forgets what he is, will be as proud as he that knows not what he is: *Forgetfulneſs is a temporary ignorance*; how much ſoever any man knows, yet he can uſe no more than he remembers, and 'tis ſeldom that he uſeth all that.

Thirdly, *The meanest things in the world are parables, or ſimilitudes, fit to ſet forth what the outward ſtate of man is.*

What the work of God is upon the ſoul, is not before us now. That's precious matter indeed, both for matter and form, there are engravings and ſtamps upon the ſoul of a glorious excellency: But (I ſay) take man in his outſide, and then the meanest and pooreſt things in the world are parables of man, *our bodies are like bodies of clay*. The Apoſtle *Peter* calleth his body an earthly tabernacle (2 Pet. 1. 13.) *I know I muſt ſhortly lay down my earthly tabernacle*: The body is a tabernacle, and that is an uncertain dwelling, it is not built as an houſe that hath foundations. And if you call it an houſe, yet it is not a houſe of marble, but of clay,

clay, Job. 4. 19. Other Scriptures call it, *an earthen veſſel* (2 Cor. 4. 7.) *We have this treasure* (ſaith the Apoſtle, but it is) *in earthen veſſels*. They had the treasure of all Goſpel truths, of Goſpel graces and of Goſpel gifts; theſe precious treasures they carried about with them, but all in earthen veſſels: Yea, the body of man is not only called earthen, but the whole man is called earth; and as if he could never be called earth enough, he is called earth three times over in one verſe (Jer. 22. 29.) *O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord*: Which words, though they may well, and (poſſibly) moſt properly in that place be taken as an appeal (uſual in Scripture) to the whole body of the earth, yet they have a clear truth, as applied to the bodies of men made of earth; all men on earth have earthen bodies, and moſt men have earthen minds too, and ſo very earth, or earth, earth, earth, nothing but earth. It is reported in the French Hiſtory, that when an old Counſellor would needs depart the Court, and retire himſelf to a private life, the king deſired him to leave him his advice in ſome general rules, what to do in the government of the kingdom; at which motion he took a fair paper, and wrote upon the top of the leaf, *moderation*, and in the middle of the leaf *moderation*, and at the bottom of the leaf, *moderation*: His meaning was, as if he had ſaid to that King, *Sir, if you would keep your kingdom quiet, carry the reins of your government moderately quite through*. So here, if the queſtion ſhould be, what is man? and a blank paper were preſented me to ſet down Job's opinion of him, I muſt write on the top of the leaf, *earth*, in the middle, *earth*, at the bottom, *earth*: *His remembrances are like unto aſhes, and his body to a body of clay*.

Job having taken his friends down by theſe arguments, and cooled their ſpirits, thinks now they may be dealt withall, and therefore concludes,

Verſe 13. *Hold your peace, let me alone that I may ſpeak, and let come on me what will.*

From the connection of theſe words, we may Obſerve,
That a man when he is humbled, is in a good temper to hear counſel.

Your bodies are bodies of clay, now, *Let me alone, hold your peace that I may ſpeak*; If you attend your own condition, you will the better attend my counſel. *Pride of heart ſtoppeth the ear.*

H h h

They

They who have high thoughts of themselves, think meanly of what is said unto them by others. Were men low in their own eyes, they would embrace every advice that hath truth and holiness in it.

At the 5th verse Job said, *O that you would altogether hold your peace*; here he turns his wish into a charge,

Hold your peace, let me alone that I may speak.

But doth Job, as many, who because they love to hear themselves speak, desire others to hold their peace? Doth Job speak thus because he would have all the talk? Or because he was resolved to have the last word?

Jobs modesty and humbleness of mind may acquit him from such imputations. This his forwardness to speak, and importunity for audience, did both arise, not from his own desire to speak, but from a willingness to rectifie what his friends had spoken amiss, and to set himself right in their opinions: or he advises them to hold their peace, lest by speaking as they had done they should lose their peace. *Many break not only the outward peace of others, but the inward peace of their own souls, because they cannot (in this sence) hold their peace.* There might be much more peace than there is, in our hearts, in our houses, in the common-wealth, in the Church, if we could teach our tongues to hold their peace, when it is unseasonable to speak. There is a time to be silent, and a time to speak; could we time our tongues well, how well might we time our actions! because our words are so unruly, therefore our wayes are so uneven. Job saw it was time for his friends to hold their peace, and time for him to speak: Therefore he saith, *Hold your peace, let me alone that I may speak.*

Why doth Job add, *Let come on me what will?* A strange kind of speech. Doth it become a man to be so resolute, or rather (as the words at first view import) so desperate? Is not here the voice of desperation? Would any wise man speak so?

Let come on me what will.

Tacet paulif-

per ut loquar

quodamq; mihi

mens suggeste-

rit. Vulg.

The Vulgar translateth this part of the sence thus, *Hold your peace that I may speak whatsoever my mind suggesteth to me, or, Hold your peace, let me speak whatsoever comes into my mind; as if*

if *Job* would speak any thing that came next, or floated uppermost in his phancy; so some gloss the interpretation of the *Vulgar*, which is indeed dishonourable to suppose of him. Shall we think that he cared not how he spake, who had so often reproved his friends for speaking carelessly? Would he run headlong into that error which he had so severely reprehended?

Loquar quicquid in buccam venerit.

Let come upon me what will.

The word [*Let come*] signifies to pass over, or pass upon; so then, *I will speak, let what will pass upon me*, is no more but this, let what censure soever pass upon me; censure me how you will, I will speak; or, I will speak how ever you take it.

Loquar & transeat super me quidvis.

Or, It may refer to the determination of God; I will speak and stand to his sentence, let him pass what judgement he pleaseth concerning me, I am resolved to maintain my cause: as we say in our language, when we are resolved to do a thing, *Fall back, or fall edge, I will do it.*

Varab. Quocumque res sit casura pro me loquar. Bez. Loquar meo periculo quicquid tandem mihi sit eventurum.

Job in these words removeth a second pretence which his friends made for what they had spoken.

First, They said, They did all for the glory of God, and to maintain his justice. As to that, he told them roundly before, that God needed none of their patronage, *Will you speak wickedly for God? will you talk deceitfully for him?* He desires not your lies to defend and uphold his cause.

There was a second thing which his friends held forth as a ground of their counsels, and that was the tender care and compassion which they had of *Job* himself, lest going on thus complaining, yea, as they thought, thus blaspheming, the Lord should bring somewhat worse, then ever yet he had brought, upon him. As *Job* therefore takes off the former pretence before, so he takes off this here: As if he had said, *You seem to be very tender of me, lest God should lay some further judgement upon me for maintaining my integrity, but I will speak, come of it what will, at my peril be it, I will bear all the blame my self, take you no care, have you but patience to hear me speak, let all the trouble that may ensue be on my score, I will be accountable to God for it.* 'Tis true, *Job* being provoked speaks thus with some heat, and was delirous rather to cast himself wholly upon God then to hear his friends any longer.

Ego de me ipso rationem reddam Deo, & quicquam, Interim non sine stomacho hoc dico, sed irritatus eis.

Hence Observe,

First, *An upright heart is very resolute; I will speak; and let come to me what will.*

There is nothing that can make a man afraid, who is not afraid of himself. *The righteous is bold as a lion.* As one of the ancient Myrtyrs spake, when his persecuters terrified him with threatenings, *There is nothing* (saith he) *of things visible, nothing of things invisible that I fear, I will stand to my profession of the name of Christ, and contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the Saints, let come on't what will.* It is said of Luther, when he was to go to the meeting at Worms, that being informed by his friends that he had many enemies lying in wait to ruine him, *Tell me not of it* (saith he) *for I will go though there were as many devils to assault me as there are tiles upon the houses.* Thus the Apostle Paul (Act. 21. 10.) when some did weep and mourn over him, because it was prophesied that he should be bound at Jerusalem: *Agabus* had bound himself with Paul's girdle, and said, *So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that oweth this girdle, and thereupon they entreated him to forbear going up; Forbear?* (saith he) *No, I will go to Jerusalem, I am ready, not to be bound only at Jerusalem, but to die there for the Name of the Lord Jesus: I'll put it to a venture.* When once *Hesters* heart was set upon it to engage for the deliverance of the Jews, she would on, *I will go in to the King, which is not according to the law* (I know I run an hazard) *and if I perish, I perish: I am upon a good ground, and in a good cause, though I fail in some outward formalities, yet I will venture.* Thus will an upright heart speak, thus will an upright heart do: *An upright heart will both speak and do, let come on it what will; let the world be pleased or displeased, let the world frown or smile, let the world be angry or embrace.* And it is the same phrase in the Hebrew which we have (2 Sam. 18. 23.) when *Ahimaaz* would go and carry the tidings of *Absaloms* death unto *David* (*Joab* had sent *Cushi* with the message before, yet *Ahimaaz* would needs run after him) *Let me, I pray thee* (saith he to *Joab*) *run after Cushi: And Joab said, wherefore wilt thou run, my son, seeing thou hast no tidings ready? But howsoever* (said he) *let me run; I have a mind to carry this message howsoever, that is, let come on me what will.* Even so saith the soul in its uprightness and resolvedness upon the waies of God, though checkt with why would you do so?

וְהִי מַה
Et sit quicquid.

Howsoever

Howsoever let me go, though you think it is to no purpose, yet let me go on: Let come of it what will, I resign the issue wholly to God.

Secondly, When Job speaks thus, *Let come on it what will*, you must know he had very good ground for what he spake, he knew whom he trusted, and trust him he would though he slew him, as we shall hear him professing with his next breath.

Hence Note,

An upright heart never feareth any hurt from God.

You think I am running upon the spears point, even upon the displeasure of God; well, I'll try that; *let come of it what will*, Non desperari
I have not one jealous thought of God: As one in sickness and pain, ready to die, seeing his friends about him mourn, said, *Do not trouble your selves, I know God will do me no hurt.* Job verba sunt sed
was willing to bear any thing at Gods hand, even a slaying, and yet he believed he should not bear the weight of his little finger *Job qui max sue
spei rationem
reddidit. Merc.*
(as we say) upon the account of reproof. Job was not desperate, nor did he defie and dare God as wicked men use to do: tell them of hell, they care not for hell, tell them God will be angry, they regard not his anger. A gracious heart cannot slight, and would not for a world willingly incur the least displeasure, or so much as a frown from God, a frown from God would go to his very heart. But he can speak out of the height of his confidence, that in any just thing he will on, and bear all the blame which God will lay upon him, being well assured that God will lay no blame upon him at all from his anger or justice, though, in his wise providence, he should lay a multitude of the sorest afflictions upon him.

But what is it which makes the Saints so resolute with God that they fear not any hurt from God?

How can they fear any hurt from God, when they have so many promises of good from God? God hath not spoken one hard word against them all the Bible over, nor will he bear it that any should speak any thing but good concerning them. *Say to the righteous, it shall be well with him.* The Apostle assures us that the law (namely in the threatnings of it) is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly, and for sinners, &c. The law was not set to bring any of the punishments which are threatned there upon the righteous and holy: The godly man needs not fear any hurt from the law, because the law

is

is not made to punish or to condemn a righteous man, though it be set to guide and order the conversation of a righteous man: But the law is made for the wicked, they have cause to fear all the terrours of it, and God will at last open the treasury of his wrath, and bring out all the weapons of his indignation that lye there, and strike them thorow. Now, if the Saints fear not the threatening of the law, what need they fear any thing? Other parts of the word are full of their consolations: *Yea, whatsoever was written heretofore, was written for their learning, that they through patience and comfort of the Scripture might have hope, and so rest their souls sweetly in the arms of God, as in the arms of a tender father.* Why should they be afraid of any evil from God, who hath promised them so much good? yea, that *all shall work together for good to them*: May not this make any good man say confidently, I will do my duty, come on it what will: What can come of it but good? because the Lord hath said *all shall work together for good*; though haply I shall have a cross, it will be good; though the Lord leave me to the cruel dealings of men, it will be good. But especially while we look up and consider what Jesus Christ hath done, what Christ hath suffered, what Christ hath undertaken and stands engaged in on their behalf, they may well put themselves upon God, and appeal not only to his mercy, but stand to the utmost of his justice. They may expect hard measure from men (and the best is they can do well enough let men do their worst) but as for all the hard measure they shall receive from God, *I dare* (as we say in our common speech) *excuse them for a penny*; I may say to any upright and faithful soul, such an one as Job was, Go on, let come on it what will, I will bear all the chidings, yea, all the smart thou shalt ever hear or feel from God. Job having by these arguments, taken from the excellency of God, and his friends baseness, prepared their minds to attention, and taken upon him a resolution to speak, speaks home in the next words, *Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth, &c.*

Job Chap. 13. Vers. 14, 15, 16.

Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth, and put my life in mine hand?

Though he slay me yet will I trust in him; but I will maintain mine own wayes before him:

He also shall be my salvation, for an hypocrite shall not come before him.

JOB resolved to speak in the former verse, and here he speaks indeed. But doth he not bite his own tongue? Or rather, Doth not his tongue bite him? while he saith, *Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth?* It is the Apostles great *Axiome*, founded in the laws of nature (Eph. 5. 29.) *No man ever hated his own flesh, but loveth and cherisheth it, &c.* Job speaks as if he hated or were cruel to his own flesh; *Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth, &c?* But if we enquire into this speech, we shall find it an argument not of any hatred against himself, but of abundant love to, and faith in God.

The words, in general, set forth the temper and state of Jobs spirit, or in what frame of heart he stood ready to speak unto God, having before resolved to speak: As if he had said, *I am far enough from rage, or from despair, I am neither out of my wits nor out of my hopes, I come to plead my cause with God, having my heart filled with a strong confidence in God, resting and reposing myself upon him, and giving up all that I have or am unto him: Let me speak* (saith he, in the former verse) *and let come on me what will; at my peril be it, I will trust in God;* And he seems to explain himself here; *Do not think that I mean to tear my flesh, and to run violently upon my own ruine, when I said, let come on me what will; no, this was not the language either of fury or of despair, but of faith and confidence; for (as it follows) though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.*

Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth?

First, There are some who conceive that Job being in a commotion of spirit, upon some suggestion of the devil to despair, and to give up all for lost; did therefore indeed tear his own flesh.

*Aliqui suspican-
tur lobum re-
spondentem &
repugnantem
hosti interius a-
liquid instillanti
& ad selace-
randum stimu-
lanti. Pined.*

flesh, and seek to cast away his life; to which Job recalling him-
self, answereth here, *Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth, and
put my life in mine hand?* As if he should have said, *O thou enemy,
satan, why dost thou tempt me thus? why dost thou put me upon de-
spairing thoughts? why wouldst thou have me let go my hold of God?
why dost thou provoke me to carry my self as a mad man, tearing my
flesh with my teeth, and even throwing my life out of my hand?*
This carrieth a fair sence, supposing such a temptation was upon
him; and indeed there is no temptation so black and devil-
like, but we may suppose the devil presenting it to this afflicted
soul.

Secondly, The words may be expounded as an enquiry after the
reason or cause, why he endured such grievous afflictions: *Where-
fore do I take my flesh in my teeth, and put my life in mine hand?*
*What's the matter that I am cast into such extremities, and put upon
such grievous trials as I am at this time? Wherefore am I not only
counsel'd, but almost constrained by my bodily pains, and the troubles of
my spirit to seek ease in tearing mine own flesh, and in laying violent
hands upon my body? if my gestures or speeches are unusual, so
are my sorrows; the sense of what I suffer even makes me do I
know not what, or what I know I should not. Wherefore do I take
my flesh, &c.* That's a second interpretation, taken from the
impatient postures of those who are in great afflictions. Such
sometimes rend and tear their garments, so did Job in the begin-
ning of this book, when he heard the first news of his sad cala-
mities, yea, such will sometimes tear or bite their own flesh, and
gnaw their tongues. 'Tis said that when the fifth Angel poured
out his vial upon the seat of the beast, that his kingdom was full of
darkness (that is, of trouble) and they gnawed their tongues for
pain (Rev. 16.10.) They gnaw their tongues when they are pu-
nished, who never smite upon their thighs, nor are pricked at
the heart because they have sinned.

*Existimatis me
desperantis in-
star mibi velle
mortem consci-
scere, at quorsu-
ego me lacerem,
& mibi ipsi
vitam eripiam?
Sanct.*

Thirdly, Others interpret the words as a denial of impati-
ence, which his friends had often objected against him; As if
he had said, *You think that I carry my self as a man that is despe-
rate, tearing my flesh, &c. but you are much deceived in me, where-
fore should I do a thing so unbecoming one that trusts in God, as I
do? I trust in God, yea, though he should slay me, yet will I trust
in him; I complain indeed of my own afflictions, sense of pain causeth
me to do so, but I do not complain against God, my faith and trust*

in him, will not let me do so. Some conceive that here Job answers the words of Eliphaz at the beginning of the 5th chapter (ver. 2.) *Wrath killeth the foolish man, and envy slayeth the silly one;* wicked foolish men are so envious and unquiet in their spirits, that they even kill themselves with vexation; but why should I, what reason have I, who am assured of the good will of God to me, and am resolved to submit to his good pleasure, what reason have I to *tear my flesh, or throw my life out of mine hand?*

There is a fourth interpretation, that Job in this query hath reference to his own weakness and leanness, to the decay of his strength and flesh; *Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth?* As if he should have said, I am so wasted and consumed, so far spent, that all the flesh I have will scarce make a morsel, a man may take it up in his teeth at once. Thus it is expounded by that (chap. 19. 20.) *I am escaped with the skin of my teeth,* I am nothing but skin and bones. So, *Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth?* Why am I brought thus low, thus lean? all my flesh will scarce make one mouth-full.

Lastly, Some render, not, *Wherefore do I,* but, *Wherefore should I take my flesh in my teeth?* that is, wherefore should I be cruel to my self? You think I utterly neglect my self, and have given up all my hopes; but I have not, I am not come to that pass yet, and I firmly believe I never shall. It is bad enough when we eat and devour one another, but it notes the worst of conditions when we devour and eat up our selves. It is said of the fool (Eccles. 4. 5.) *He foldeth his hands together, and eateth his own flesh.* Who is this fool? and, how doth the fool eat his own flesh? By the fool (in this place) we are to understand the sluggard or the slothful man; *folded hands are the emblem of idleness:* The idle man, or the sluggard, foldeth his hands together, that is, he will not work, he will take no pains: Now, he that will not labour, saith the Apostle, 2 Thes. 3. *neither let him eat.* The sluggard will not labour, and therefore he eateth his own flesh, having nothing else to eat. But doth the sluggard indeed feed upon his own flesh? Is he a *self-Canibal?* will he endure the pain of eating his own flesh, who will not take the pains to get himself bread to eat? No, but he is said to eat his own flesh, because while he favours himself too much, he is cruel to himself, he starves himself; hunger eats his flesh, because he hath nothing to satisfy his hunger; or he is said to eat his own

נפש
levare.

Quare levo
dentibus meis
carnes meas?
q. d. Ita confe-
ctus sum, ut
quantus ego
sum levare den-
tibus possim, et
quasi uno bolo
devorari. Pine.
En anima mea
stat super labia
mea statim e-
gressura, vide-
orq. solis meis
dentibus reliqua
totius corporis
carnem susten-
tare. Bold.
Lacerare carnes
&c. est seipsam
affligere.

flesh, because through sloath and the neglect of his calling he is brought into want, and into such want, that if he will eat, he must eat his own flesh, for he hath got neither boyld nor rost, neither wet nor dry to sustain his life. Or lastly, he may be said to eat his flesh, while he folderh his hands, because he grows vex and passionate against himself, when he sees into what straits and bonds his lazy folded hands have brought him. **He is a fool indeed that thinks folded hands will either fill his belly with meat, or his mind with content.** So (*Isa. 9. 20.*) when the Prophet describeth the trouble of a people under the wrath of God, he shews that at last they shall grow cruel to themselves, *They shall eat every man the flesh of his own arm*, that is, they shall be so forgetful of all the laws of nature and friendship, that they shall either vex their nearest friends, as he speaks in the former verse, *No man shall spare his brother*, or they shall vex themselves, who are nearer than any friend; no man shall spare his own flesh. Thus the Lord threatned the oppressours of his people, that he would at last make them feed upon their own flesh, and drunken with their own blood (*Isa. 49. 26.*) They who have been cruel against his servants shall be unnatural to themselves; they shall either destroy and vex one another, or every man shall destroy and vex himself, till they are all utterly consumed. *Job* sees no reason why he should do what such as these do for want of faith. *Wherefore should I take my flesh in my teeth?* I know my duty is to love and take care of my self, and I know God loves and takes care of me too. Some self-love is a vertue in all, a grace in some, it being the measure of that love we owe unto others, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self.* And as a man is bound to take a special care of all those (within his compass) whom God loves, so he ought to be much more careful of himself who hath received any evidence that God loves him: And hence it is (according to this exposition) that *Job* saith, *Wherefore do I, or, should I take my flesh in my teeth?* Shall I who have received so much kindness from God, and (notwithstanding these wounds) shall receive more, shall I, shall such a one as I be unkind to my self?

Lastly, These words (I conceive) carry in them a *self-reproof*: As if *Job* perceiving his spirit growing somewhat unquiet and unsettled, and himself ready to break out into passionate gestures, under the pressure of his continual troubles, did thus chide and rebuke

rebuke down theſe commotions, *Wherefore do I take my fleſh in my teeth?* Why am I thus impatient? O my ſoul, doth this become thee, or doeſt thou now walk by that rule of obedience which thou art to learn by the things which thou ſuffereſt? Is this the acting of a patient man, is this to ſubmit to the hand and rod of a father? In this ſence *David* (upon the apprehenſion of ſome undue ſtrivings and ſtruglings in his ſpirit) takes himſelf to taſk, ſchools and catechiſes his ſoul with ſerious queſtions (*Pſal.* 42. 11.) *Why art thou caſt down, O my ſoul? why art thou diſquieted within me? hope thou in God.* *David* after theſe chidings bids his ſoul hope in God, and *Job* after theſe chidings makes higheſt profeſſions of his hope in God, *Wherefore do I take my fleſh in my teeth, &c.* Though he ſlay me, yet I will truſt in him.

Hence Obſerve,

First, That in great afflictions a man is apt to afflict himſelf and to add to his own afflictions.

When we have more upon us then we are well able to bear, we uſually put more weight upon our ſelves. We ſcarce feelleſſer burthens at all, and great ones we feel too much. When God ſmites us we are ready to tear our ſelves.

Secondly, Conſider the ground of this, why is it that men (as *ut qui in cruciatibus carnes ſuas mordent allevare ſe ſentiunt, ſic ego dum hæc loquor?* Chryſoſt.) afflict themſelves when they are afflicted? It is becauſe they hope to find ſome eaſe in it.

Hence Note,

That a pain of our own adding ſeems to leſſen our received pains.

And indeed it doth ſomewhat draw the mind from thinking of what it feeleth: Every trouble is the leſſe to us by how much we mind it the leſſe; and if we could not mind it at all, it would be no trouble to us at all. For this reaſon, in extremitie of pain, as in the ſtone, gout, toothach, men uſually divert and turn off their thoughts, as much as they can, from what they feel, by diſcourſe and the company of friends; yea, we ſhall ſee them ſometimes bite their lips or their fingers; ſuch pain added to pain gives ſome mitigation of pain.

Thirdly, Note,

It is ſinful to be active in our own miſeries, or to afflict our ſelves.

Wherefore ſhould I take my fleſh in my teeth? It is unnatural to do ſo. It is unnatural to take the fleſh of others in our teeth;

more to take our own; every man is nearer to himself than to any other; therefore a sin committed against our selves is greater, because we sin against a nearer engagement. We ought to suffer cheerfully from the hand of God or man, but we must not suffer from our own. No man must be his own carver, either in his comforts or in his sorrows. We must let God alone to cut out and measure our portion of both. *Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth?*

Fourthly, Observe,

A godly man will not take his own part, nor bear with himself when he doth evil, or goe besides the rule, whether in active or passive obedience.

He is willing to receive counsel or reproof from others, and he is upon all discoveries of the naughtiness of his heart, his own reprover: he usually casts the first stone at his sin with his own hand, and blames himself more than any other man can for his own secret distempers or outward miscarriages. A carnal heart doth what it can to excuse its sin, or to flatter himself in it: but a holy heart doth both aggravate and rebuke its own sin; *Wherefore am I so vain, so earthly? why am I so proud, and so impatient?* David needeth no man to accuse him of his sinful envy at the prosperity of the wicked, he layes on load upon himself (*Psal. 73. 22.*) *So foolish was I, and ignorant, even as a beast before thee.* He once indeed (being under a desertion) wanted a Nathan to bring his sin home to his conscience; but when he was come to himself, he could be his own Nathan: *As for me* (saith he, ver. 2.) *my feet were almost gone: Why was I thus foolish?* So Job here, why am I thus unquiet? *Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth, &c?*

And put my life in mine hand?

Animam meam sollicitus custodio, non secus ac rem pretiosissimam, quam nusquam tuto deponere, nec ulli credere, audeamus. Pined.

These words have the same meaning, in general, with the former. I shall only open the importance of the phrase.

First, *Putting the life into the hand*, is interpreted for a solicitous care of life: As if he had said, *Wherefore do I keep life so close, as if I were loath to part with it?* If God slay me I will trust in him; what need I take so much care of this life to hold it in my hand? Let it go, *I know it shall be well enough with me; if I lose this life, I shall find a better, for I believe in God.* When a man would preserve and keep a thing safe, he carries it in his hand, he will

will not lay it out of his hand. And that is one reason why the Saints are said to be in the *hand of God*, and to resign themselves into his hand; *Into thine hand do I commit my spirit*: it is their desire to be in the hand of God; and Christ assureth us (*Joh. 10.*) that we being in his fathers hand, none can take us out. Holy *Job* knew his life, his spiritual life was in the hand of God, and that his going out of this natural life, was but a passage to eternal life: Wherefore then (according to this exposition) should he so solicitously put his life into his own hand? *We need not fear to part with that which the grace of God hath found.*

Secondly, Others understand by *life, the whole man*, and so the putting of his life in his hand, notes bodily infirmity; as if being weak with sickness, he was forced to lean upon his hand. *Wherefore do I put my life in my hand?* that is, wherefore am I brought thus low, that I do even go upon my hands? Little children before they can go upon their feet, go upon all four, as we say, they go upon their hands. The feet and legs are the pillars and supporters of the body. *Jobs* pillars (saith this interpretation) shrunk under him, he must walk and live upon his hands. The learned Author quoted in the margin contends much for this sense: but I shall not stay upon it.

Thirdly, *Wherefore do I put my life in my hand?* Is (as another phancieth) a metaphorical speech, implying, that a man is dying or near to death: the life of such a man sits upon his lips, or is come out into his hand, ready to shake hands with him, and return to God that gave it. As if he had said, my life is gone out of my body, I am in the state of death, or (as his words are also glossed) my life is so wasted and diminished, that it is scarce a handful. Why is it thus? Is it because Satan hopes that yet in the extremity of my affliction he shall obtain his wish, and hear me with my last breath blaspheme God and die? If that be his end he shall miss his end, *for if the Lord slay me, yet will I trust in him.*

Lastly, We may expound the words yet more clearly and satisfactorily by divers other concurrent Scriptures, all which carry this plain sense, *that putting of the life into the hand*, notes only the exposing of our life unto peril or danger. So *Jephthah* bespeaks the quarrelling *Ephramites* (*Judg. 12. 3.*) *When I saw that ye delivered me not, I put my life in my hands, and passed over against the children of Ammon: that is, when I saw you deserted me,*
and

Nomen anime pro tota persona sumi potest, ut ponere animam in manibus sit ita debilitari ut homo stare pedibus non possit; sed manibus sustentetur, ad modum infanti-um. Bold. Volis extremisq; innitens digitis vitam ago.

Anima in manibus est anima e corpore excessa, qua enim in manibus habemus extra nos sunt. Sancte

and would give me no assistance, I resolved to put it to an adventure; I put my life in my hands and passed over against the children of *Ammon*: I went upon great disadvantages, my Army was not a match for the enemy, nor fit to meet them in the field, yet I ran that hazard, I put my life in my hands. So (1 Sam. 19. 4.) when *Jonathan* pleaded for *David* before his father *Saul*, and told him what good service he had done for him, and what he had deserved of the kingdom, he instanceth in that unparalleld act of valour, when he undertook proud *Goliath*. He did put (saith he) his life in his hand, and slew the *Philistine*, that is, he put himself into a great danger: the *Philistine* was such a monster of men, that the whole Army of *Israel* trembled at his challenge; therefore surely a single man was in great danger to deal with him hand to hand: *David* doing so put his life in his hand. The Witch of *Endor* is at this language with *Saul* (1 Sam. 28. 21.) I have put my life in my hand, that is, I have ventured my life in raising up of *Samuel*; this she said because there was a law lately made against Witches by *Saul* himself. Once more, *David* useth the same expression (Psal. 119. 109.) My soul is continually in mine hand, yet do I not forget thy law. The souls of the Saints are alwaies in the hands of God, and it is both their safety and their honour that they are so.

Why doth *David* say, my soul is in mine hand, had he call'd it out of the hand of God, and taken the care of it upon himself? Nothing less. His meaning is only this, I walk in the midst of dangers, and among a thousand deaths continually, I am in deaths often, my life is exposed to perils every day, yet do I not forget thy law: I keep close to thee, and will keep close to thee whatsoever comes of it. *Augustine*, upon that place, doth ingenuously confess that he understood not what *David* meant, by having his soul in his hands: But *Jerome*, another of the Ancients teacheth us, that it is an *Hebraism*, signifying a state of extreamest peril. The Greeks also have drawn it into a proverb, speaking the same thing.

But why doth the holding or putting the life in the hand, signifie the exposing of the life to peril? There is a two-fold reason of it.

First, Because those things which are carried openly in the hand are apt to fall out of the hand, and being carried in sight they are apt to be snatcht or wrested out of the hand. And therefore, though to be in the hand of God, signifies safety, because

Est *Hebraismus*, quo significatur vitam habere periculo expostam; Hier Ep. ad *Suniam*. Εἰ τὴν χεῖρὶ τοῦ ἄνθρωπου ἐχει. Græc. proverb. pro versari inter pericula. Quod manu portatur facile excidit, facile etiam diripi potest, & si servatur sola Dei protectione servari videtur. Merc.

cause his hand is armed with irresistible power to protect us : Yet for a man to carry a thing in his own hand, is to carry it in danger, because his hand is weak, and there are safer waies of carrying or conveying a thing, than openly in the hand. If a man be to ride a long journey with any treasure about him, he doth not carry it in his hand, but puts it in some secret and close place where it may be hid, and so more secure. The *Caldæe Paraphrast*, to expresse the elegancy of that place fore-cited out of the *Pſalm*, *Anima mea periclitatur, ac si* gives it thus, *My life is in as much danger as if it stood upon the in superficie very superficies or outside of my hand*, as if he had no hold of it, *manus meæ esset.* Chald. Paraph. but it stood barely upon his hand; for that which is set upon the plain or palm of the hand, and not grasped, is in greater danger. Things safe kept are hidden or held fast. *There was a treasure hid in the field, which when the man had found, he went and hid it* (Mat. 13.44.) he did not carry it in his hand, but hid it, laid it up safely. *Quæ aliquis amittere timet diligenter abscondit.* Aquin. So our life is said to be hid with Christ in God. (Col. 3. 3.) which in loc. notes not only the secrecy of this spiritual life, but the safety of it also. As some things are hid that they may not be seen, so other things are hid, that they may not be lost. Hence, to carry the life in the hand, imports the danger of losing of it.

Secondly, There is another reason of that speech, because when a man is about to deliver a thing or to give it up, he takes it in his hand. They that put themselves upon great perils and dangers for God and his people, deliver up their lives and their all to God. Hence that counsel of the Apostle (1 Pet. 4. 19.) *Let them that suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.* So here, the life of men in danger is said to be put in the hand, because such are as it were ready to deliver and commit their lives unto God, that he would take care of their lives to preserve them from the danger, or to take them to himself, if they lose them in his service, either doing or suffering according to his will. That of the Apostle comes near this notion (1 Joh. 3. 16) *We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren*: now, if we lay them down we must put them into our hands, as a man that is ready to lay down money upon a bargain, or for a commodity, takes his purse into his hand. Job had his life in his hand, ready to deliver it up to God, yea, though God should seem to take it violently from him, yet he would willingly resign it to him and trust him with it. This sence carries a clear reason of such kind of speaking, yet I do not

not conceive it to be the particular reason of it in this place : For, as to such a sense, *Job* should rather confidently affirm, I will, or I do put my life in my hand, then either question or expostulate with himself, *Wherefore do I put my life in mine hand ?*

Now, seeing *Job*, speaking thus, refutes a charge that was brought against him, that he was careless of his life, or through distemper and impatience cared not what became of it ; We may Observe,

That though we are to venture or put our lives unto any hazard when God calleth us, yet no man may expose his life without a call.

Job would have his friends know, that he did not carry his life open in his hand as a thing he made no reckoning of. Our lives are given us of God, and till he bid us bring them forth and carry them in our hands, we must keep them as safe as we can. I only hint this here, because the strength of *Jobs* intendment in these words lyeth in their connection with the following verse, to which I pass.

Verse 15. *Though he slay me yet will I trust in him ; but I will maintain mine own integrity.*

Why should you think that I am impatient ? Why should you censure me as desperate and careless ? This is the temper and frame of my soul ; judge you of it, whether it look like your conceptions of me. Let God do what he will with me, slay me, tear me, take away my life ; I am resolved what to do, *to trust in him.* Is this impatience or despair ?

Further, If we consider the former expostulations in the last exposition, as a reproof or a check to the motions of his own heart toward impatience ; Then these words are the lesson of instruction which he gives his soul. What ? Thou my soul in rage ? dost thou bid me take my flesh in my teeth ? I tell thee what my former resolves have been, and what my present duty is, even to trust God in all estates. And now I am upon that resolve again, *Though he slay me yet will I trust in him.*

*Afflictiones
graviore mor-
tis & occisionis
nomine signifi-
cantur. Druf.*

Though he slay me.

Slaying speaks death, and that a violent death, yet all slaying is not death. (*Rom. 8.36.*) *For thy sake are we killed, or slain, all the day long.* All the persecutions and troubles which the Saints endure

endure are their ſlaying, though they be not all unto death, yet they all go upon the account of death. *For thy ſake are we ſlain all the day long*; Paul was alive, and yet in the number of theſe ſlain: By being ſlain all the day long, he means a being alwaies within the view, or under the ſufferance of bloody perſecutors.

Though he ſlay me. Slaying is the utmoſt of outward evils.

Hence Obſerve (before I come to the main)

That there is no outward evil ſo bad, but God may lay it upon his beſt ſervants.

Job puts this ſuppoſition as his own caſe. *Though he ſlay me,*

Yet will I truſt in him.

There is a double reading of theſe words. Some read them negatively, others (as we) affirmatively.

The reaſon why the negation is added by ſome interpreters, is becauſe the ſame Hebrew word in ſound, which we tranſlate, *him*, ſignifies alſo the adverb of denial, *not* or *no*: therefore the

Maſorites obſerve that this text is to be corrected in the reading.

There is a like variety of reading upon the occaſion of this Monosyllable, *Lo* (2 King. 8. 10.) Where when *Hazael* was ſent by

Benhadad to enquire of *Eliſha* whether he ſhould recover of his diſeaſe whereof he was ſick, *Eliſha* ſaid unto him, *Go ſay unto*

him, thou ſhalt certainly recover, howbeit the Lord hath ſhewed me that he ſhall ſurely die. As if he had ſaid, though the diſeaſe in

it ſelf be not mortal, yet thou ſhalt die of it. Whereas others tranſlate it, *Eliſha* ſaid unto him, ſay, thou ſhalt not certainly re-

cover, for the Lord hath ſhewed me that he ſhall ſurely die.

Now, the negative in Job hath a double reading. Firſt, By way of interrogation, and then the ſence is the ſame with our tran-

ſlation, *Though*, or *if he ſlay me*, ſhall I not truſt in him? that is, yes, I will, or I ought to truſt in him; ſhould I diſtruſt God be-

cauſe he afflicts me, when as he afflicts to ſhew his faithfulneſs, I will not do it. Others read it negatively, without an inter-

rogation, thus, *Though he ſlay me*, I will not expect; or behold he will ſlay me, I will not hope. So the interlineal.

But would Job ſay ſo, can this ſtand with the ſtate of grace and holineſs? Were not this indeed to give up the cauſe, and to

blaſpheme God?

Lo, in Hebr

mutatis liter

mobilibus, a

non aut ei v

ipſi, ſonat.

Maſorite hui

locum enumer

inter ea que

cum ſcribantur

legantur

Merc.

Vade dic ei ſa

naberis, quan

quam aliqui ex

iſtimant amphi

bologiam fuiſſe

reſponſionem,

nam vox eadem

ſola diverſa

Scriptura ſig

nificat, aut ei

aut non.

Dic non omnia

revaleſces, Jun.

Si enecaret me

non ſperarem?

Jun.

Ecce occidit me,

non ſperabo.

Mont.

I answer, There is a sence wherein we may acquit *Job* of this charge, though we should read it negatively, which yet is not the sence I shall stay upon: For the clearing of it, I must premise two things concerning the Original text.

1. That the Hebrew word which we translate, *to trust* (of which more a little after) signifies also to expect or look for a thing at the hands of another.

*Quamvis ab eo
mortis senten-
tiam reciperem
tamen meliorem
ab eo sententiam
non expectarem,
quippe qui no-
verim non nisi
iustissime eum
hoc fecisse. Bol.*

2. The word stands alone in the Hebrew without those words which we supply, *in him*, and must be rendred thus, according to the sence under hand, *Though he slay me, I will not expect*, and then the meaning may be given thus; Although God should pronounce that heavy sentence of death upon me, yea, sign the writ for my execution, yet I would not expect a more gentle sentence or look for a reprieve, because I know that what God doth to any man, or to me, he is just in doing it; I know that if he load me with the heaviest afflictions, he may do it, and (without any further pleading or expectations) I am ready to submit unto it; and yet in this I do not carry my self as a wicked man, for *I will still maintain my wayes* (as he adds in the next words) neither in this do I cast off all my hopes or expectations in God, *for he shall be my salvation*, as he speaks in the next verse. Thus much he had said in effect before (*chap. 9. 15.*) *Whom, though I were righteous, yet would I not answer*, that is, I would not stand upon any terms with God, or expect any other terms from him: though God should wound me deeper, yet I would not hope to have him alter what he had done, as if I thought he had done me wrong. *You, my friends, conceive that I complain of God, as if he had been cruel and too severe towards me; no, I do not think so, for if he should slay me, I would not sue to him to take off that sentence as unjust; but I would willingly lay my life down at his feet, knowing that he will give me a more desirable life than this.* Thus we may fairly bring *Job* off in the negative reading; he was ready to undergo the hardest measure, and yet not to think hardly of God, or stand expecting any reversal of his judgement as too hard.

*Eccce occidit me,
non spero me
hinc liberandum,
et si fore ut con-
valescam; attum-
est de me, de-
ploratus est hic
morbus. Merc.
e Rab. Lev.*

Again, thus, *Behold he will slay me, I will not hope*, that is, I see my bodily estate and outward comforts brought so low, that it were folly to hope; Why should I hope for life and prosperity here, when providence speaks to me of nothing but death, and me-thinks I see the Lord ready to slay me? my disease is not for cure,

cure, nor my wounds for healing, why then should I ſtand hoping about theſe poor tranſitory things? yet I would not have you think I am without all hope, I have better things to hope for than theſe, and about them I have a lively hope, though I die, as he adds in the next verſe: *He alſo ſhall be my ſalvation, and an hypocrite ſhall not come before him.*

But I ſhall paſs that negative tranſlation, and give the ſence as it lies affirmatively before us in ours. *The ſtrength of faith is never fully tried but under and upon a croſs.* Death and hope ſeem to be at the greateſt diſtance; here we have death and hope brought together: Death could not kill *Jobs* hope, his hope did almoſt enliven his death. *Job* had more life in death, then moſt have in their lives. God could eaſily ſlay *Jobs* body, but his faith could not be ſlain. God will not ſlay faith, and no other power can. Behold *Job* dying and believing, *Though he ſlay me, yet will I truſt in him*; and ſo this text is the triumph of *Jobs* faith over ſorrow and death: The uprightness of his heart, the greatneſs of his ſpirit, the undauntedneſs of his courage, his contempt of the world, and his longing deſires after God, are all wrapt up and ſpoken out together in theſe words. As if he had ſaid, *I ſee the Lord is determined to take my life, but what if he do? do you think that I have nothing to truſt him for beyond that? If he deſtroy my body, I know he will ſave my ſoul; I have matters of greater moment to truſt God with then thoſe which concern this frail piece of fleſh: Death it ſelf ſhall not caſt me down from the footings of my faith, or beat me off from the hold-faſt of my hope in God.*

Again, As theſe words have in them an aſſertion of *Jobs* faith, ſo alſo a vindication of his perſon from the ſuſpitions or accuſations of his friends. For how can he be charged as wicked who profeſſeth truſt in God, and promiſeth that he will truſt in him, even unto death, and in it.

The word which we tranſlate truſt, ſignifies alſo to expect or hope; and it ſignifies expectation, firſt, with patience and waiting: ſecondly, with aſſurance of receiving that which we wait for: thirdly, with preſent joy, or joy concomitant with ſorrow. So then, *I will truſt him*, is not only, *I will ſtay more time, but I will ſtay with patience, with aſſurance, yea, and with joyfulneſs.*

But how can a man truſt God, when he is ſlain? He that is

*Verba ſunt
magne ſpei &
fidei, cujus vis
maxime in cru-
ce & morte
oſtenditur, ideo
utrumq; con-
iunxit, mortem
& ſpem. Merc.*

*חל Est expe-
ctare cum lon-
ga animi, per-
ſeverantia, cum
certitudine ſu-
avi boni &
letitie. Coc.*

dead is past hope, he hath for ever done trusting and believing. For when a man is slain and dead, he either goes to heaven or to hell: If to hell, there's no hope: if to heaven, there's no need of hope; what, should a man hope for that which he enjoys, or trust when he is in possession?

I answer, first, All slaying in Scripture sence is not to bodily death; it notes sometimes only a civil death, or the putting of a person totally out of all his former power or present comforts: So the slaying of the witnesses is interpreted, *Revel. 11.* Take slaying so, and then, to trust when we are slain, is no more then to depend upon God for deliverance in extremest dangers.

Secondly, Though a man who is actually slain, cannot be said to hope; yet a man may say I will hope or trust though I am slain: For so this trust is the act of a living man concerning somewhat which he shall enjoy or be after death: So any believer dying, whether it be by a natural or a violent death, may say, *Though I die yet I will trust in God: First, For the salvation of my soul: Secondly, For the resurrection of my body: Thirdly, For the eternal rest both of soul and body together in glory.*

But what was it that *Job* was thus resolved to trust God for?

Take slaying in the first sence, for greater afflictions than any he had yet felt, and then, *I will trust in him,* is first, *a serious profession of his faithfulness and adhering to God and his waies what ever God should do with him, or how great discouragements soever God should put upon him.* So we may well expound *Job* by that admirable protestation of the Church, *Psal. 44. 17, 18, 19.* *All this is come upon us, yet have we not forgotten thee, neither have we dealt falsely in thy covenant, our heart is not turned back, neither have our steps declined from thy way, though thou hast sore broken us in the place of dragons, and covered us with the shadow of death.* *Trusting in God, in a large sence, is put for the whole compass of our duty to him, especially in evil times.* Or secondly, *I will trust him,* is a high profession of his faith, that God would give remedy to the worst of his present, or possible outward evils, and raise him up or restore him again, how low soever he should be brought.

Take slaying in the second sence, for death, and then his meaning is, that though God should take away this life, yet he had a hope laid up beyond this life: and this I conceive most proper here

here, or certainly intended here, becauſe he had ſo often given up his hopes of a temporal reſtoring, and adds expreſſely in the next verſe; *He alſo ſhall be my ſalvation.*

Hence Obſerve,

Fiſt, *The character of a godly man; he is one that truſteth in God.*

This is proper to godlineſs. It is the breath of the new creature, and only by the breath of the new creature can theſe words be ſpoken indeed, I will truſt in God. (1 Pet. 3.5.) The Apoſtle deſcribing the holy women of the former time, exhorteth that they may be a pattern to the women of the age to which he wrote, *For (ſaith he) after this manner the holy women alſo in old time, who truſted in God, adorned themſelves.* He deſcribes holy women by this, they *truſted in God.* A carnal man is a man without hope (1 Theſ. 4. 13.) *I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are aſleep, that you ſorrow not even as others which have no hope.* Who are theſe? The Apoſtle tels us, *Eph. 2. 12. Aliens from the common-wealth of Iſrael, ſtrangers from the covenant of promiſes, having no hope.* A heathen (every carnal man is no better) hath no hope, or if he have, it is like himſelf a carnal hope, in the nature of it, becauſe it is ſo in the object of it: His hope is in man (Jer. 17.5.) *Cursed be the man that truſteth in man, and maketh fleſh his arm: He that is in the fleſh truſts only in the fleſh, and fleſhly things.* (Pſal. 52.7.) *He truſts in the abundance of his riches: he can truſt in earthly riches, but he cannot put forth an act of truſt upon the unſearchable riches of God: It is an eaſie matter to ſay the words, but it is the hardeſt matter under heaven to ſay and ſay it truly, to ſay and do it, Though he ſlay me, yet will I truſt in him.*

Secondly, Obſerve,

True truſt can triumph over a worſe condition then what is preſent, how bad ſoever it is.

Job doth not ſay, I will truſt in God, though now my caſe is very ſad, but he puts a harder caſe then ever he was yet in, Though he ſlay me, yet will I truſt in him. David (Pſal. 3. 6) puts hard caſes to his ſoul, *Iſten thouſands of people ſet themſelves againſt me round about, yet will I not be afraid: David was not in ſuch ſtraits at that time (though in ſtraits) he was not beleaguered with ten thouſand enemies, but he could put thoſe ſtraits to himſelf, and yet*

yet be enlarged in dependance upon God. We have David again breathing out the very same spirit of faith in like expressions, *Psal. 27. 2. and Psal. 46. 2. Though the mountains be removed, and though the earth be carried into the midst of the sea, yet will not we fear.* He puts not only such cases as he was not in, but such as there was no probability that ever he should be in; *that the hills should be carried into the sea, that earth and sea should mingle.* Davids faith conquered not only real evils, but all imaginable evils. As the Lord puts the remotest suppositions to shew his own faithfulness, so do the Saints to shew their faith (*Isa. 54. 10.*) *Though the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, yet my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord.* Though the whole course of nature fail, yet the Lord will not let one jot of the covenant of grace fail: And that's indeed the reason why the Saints rejoyce over all difficulties, even because they know God is able to help them in greatest difficulties: He hath not spent the treasures nor the stores of his wisdom and power upon former salvations; they know if they need stronger and stranger salvations, he hath strength and wisdom enough to work them, and will, because he is as faithful and true, as he is strong or wise.

Thirdly, Observe,

Trust is due to God, it is due to God in all estates.

Some trust in God in fair weather; when they are full they can trust in God for bread; and when they are safe, they can trust him for protection: but for a man to trust God for bread in wants, and for safety when he slayeth him, to trust God in all turns, this is not only a benefit to our selves, but a duty unto God. There is nothing more due to God, as God, then trust is: even a man in high place looks to be trusted, and the higher any man is, the more he looks to be trusted. And shall not the most high God? We read (*Judg. 9. 15.*) that when the trees had chosen the bramble to be their King, the bramble puts these terms upon them, (*Judg. 9. 15.*) *If indeed you anoint me king over you, then come and put your trust in my shadow, and if not, let fire come out of the bramble, and devour the Cedars of Lebanon.* Even a bramble looks to be trusted in, if you set him up for your king. Now, if creatures love to be trusted, though they be but exalted brambles, how much more doth the Lord, the great and glorious Lord

Lord exalted over all? Surely if he be not trusted by us, we shall be consumed by him, a fire will proceed from him to devour the tallest Cedars that either distrust or do not trust in him.

Fourthly, *To trust God is an high honour done to God.*

Trust is a great part of divine worship. It is natural worship, the very discoveries of God unto us, though he should never manifest his will concerning this act, call for this. When it is discovered to us (which the word every where doth) that God is above all, that he is all-sufficient, that he is unchangeable, these very discoveries though there were never a rule for it in all the word of God, would teach us to trust upon God. There are some parts of Gods worship which we should never have known if he had not given us a direct and expreſs rule for them. Such is all his instituted worship; The special forms of worship depend upon the revealed will of God, but the general worship of God (such as to love him, to fear him, to trust upon him) flow from the manifestations of his nature, or from his very being.

But you will say, *What is trust?*

Take it in brief thus, *Pure spiritual trust is the highest exercise of faith, whereby looking upon God in himself and in his Son through the promises, the soul is raised above all fears or discouragements, above all doubts and disquietments, either for the removing of that which is evil, or for the obtaining of that which is good. This is the nature of that trust which is the honour of God; and his natural worship, as natural, is opposed to special and instituted worship.*

Fifthly, Observe,

A believer seeth God good to him, or a friend to him, when he receiveth nothing but evil from his hand, and sees nothing but frowns upon his face.

Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him; There is no man will trust a professed enemy at all, nor a reconciled enemy much: therefore *Job did not think God an enemy*, though he slew him; forasmuch as he resolved to trust him, though he slew him. No man will trust him that he suspects to hate him; A godly man hath good thoughts of God, let him be doing what he will with him. When God put *Abraham* upon that hard task to slay his son, he yet knew that God loved him, and therefore he was willing to do it; and he would trust God for that son, of which the promise of God said he should live, though the command of God

God said he shall dye. Now, as *Abraham* (the Father of believers) was perswaded, that God loved him when he bid him slay his son: So though God himself slay a believer, yet he believes that he lives in the love of God. While a believer is all over as it were in gore blood; whilst he is all wounds, and wounded (he sees) by the hand of God, yet he cannot be beaten out of this hold, God is good to him, yea, that *truly God is good to all his Israel*. Christ had said to his Disciples (*Joh. 11. 11.*) *Our friend Lazarus sleepeth*, but when *Martha* heard him give order to take away the stone from the Sepulchre (*v. 39.*) *Lord* (saith she) *by this time he stinketh, for he hath been dead four days*. Christ answers her, *said I not unto thee, that if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?* Though I was not so friendly to my friend as to come and keep him alive when he was only sick, or to raise him up as soon as he was dead, yet do not think but I am a friend to him still; *Did not I say, that if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?* I have not neglected my friend. Though I have let him lie four daies in the grave, yet he hath lain in my heart all this while. We may say in all our extremities, though God lets us die, and lie in the grave either of death or affliction, till we stink, that yet we are his *dead friends*, and he is our *living friend*, in whose bosome and embraces we have lain all the while. See how *Paul* exulteth in the love of God in the midst of all troubles and persecutions: Suppose sword and famine should compass him about, *Rom. 8. 38, 39.* *I am perswaded that neither life nor death, &c. nor any other creature should be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.* Holy *David* of old rejoiced in this assurance, (*1 Sam. 23. 5.*) *Although my house be not so with God, yet (I know God is my friend, for) he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure, for this is all my salvation and all my desire although he make it to grow, that is, though my house should not flourish in worldly dignity and outward pomp, yet he is my salvation, and I can desire no more.*

Sixtly, Observe, *Job* had said before, *Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth, and put my life in mine hand?* why should I take such courses as these to ease my present trouble? *though he slay me, I will trust in him;* as if he had said, my remedy is in God, not in tearing my flesh, or in impatient gestures: these would prove as miserable comforts as my friends are comforters, the nearest

nearest way to sound consolation, is to trust in God.

Hence Observe,

That trust in God is the best ease to the soul, and a remedy of evils before the remedy comes.

God often defers the remedy as to our sense, when he gives it to our faith. He that believes not is condemned already, he hath his judgement before the judgement: and he that believes is saved and eased already: he hath his deliverance before deliverance. Whilst our wounds have no cure, trust in God cures them. Faith is a remedy before a remedy in all kind of evils. (Isa. 50. ult.) *Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servants, that walketh in darkness and hath no light? Let him trust in the Name of the Lord, and stay upon his God. Trust in God, though you are in darkness, though you see no light, this is light before lights, pardon before pardon. Trust God in temptations, and you are above temptations, while you groan under the burden of them. Trust God in weakness, and you are strong: Paul in such a case besought the Lord thrice, and was answered with this, 2 Cor. 12. 9. My grace (not thy grace) is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness; (he doth not say, thy weakness is perfected into strength.) This satisfied Paul to the full, as he concludes in the next words, Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. When we rest with our weaknesses upon Christ, the power of Christ rests upon us. And then, as it was with Paul (vers. 10.) when we are weak then are we strong, when we are sorrowful then have we joy, when we are in bondage then are we free. Thus by trusting we have either a remedy from, or a remedy in all our troubles and afflictions.*

Further, *Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him*; his faith was pitcht upon God, and he passeth by friends and creatures, as if he had said, *Truly though you endeavour to comfort me, and would give me your utmost help, yet I cannot trust upon you; but if God should slay me, I would trust him: though all the world should engage and promise to do their best for me, I could not trust them; but if God should do the worst against me, yet I would trust in him.*

Hence Observe,

That we can never trust God too much, nor creatures too little.

We can never trust God too much, because as he is God, all our trust is but due to him. And we cannot trust creatures too little, because they are but creatures, and so no trust is due to them. There is a trust of charity or civility due to man; it is not good to be alwayes jealous one of another; but though there may be a trust of charity, yet there must not be a trust of confidence upon any creature. *Some jealousies of man are against the rule of love to man, but all trust in man is against the law of duty to God.* Now, as it is a duty to trust in God, so if we look upon God, we have the greatest encouragements; if upon our selves, the greatest cause to trust him.

First, *Consider the Being and Essence of God; and there's enough to draw out trust. His Being is in and from himself. It is best to depend upon him who is absolutely independent.*

Secondly, Consider the excellency of his Being. Job said to his friends a little before, *Doth not his excellency make you afraid? I may say here as truly, Doth not his excellency make you confide, or trust? The power, the wisdom, the goodness, the mercy, the faithfulness, the truth, the unchangeableness of God, these, all these excellencies of his Being, call upon us to trust in him.* Who would not trust in him that hath all, and is All? Who would not trust in him that can do whatsoever he pleaseth, and will do whatsoever he hath promised?

Thirdly, Consider him in his relations to us: He is our Creator, that's the ground of trust given by the Apostle, *Let us commit our selves unto him in well doing as unto a faithful Creator.* He that made us will surely take care of us: We may well give up our selves and our all unto him who gave us our selves, and our all. *And if creation assure us of preservation, then redemption assures us of it much more.* God was at so much cost in making of us, that he will certainly take care of us; but he hath been at much more cost in redeeming us, and therefore he will much more take care of us, upon the account of that relation. He hath been at too much charge with us, to lay us aside and throw us by. Again, He is a Father; *earthly fathers lay up and provide for their children*, and shall not our heavenly Father? All the relations wherein we stand to God are grounds of our trust upon him, and engagements of his assistance to, and providence over us.

Fourthly, The operations and workings of God call for this trust:

trust: What hath God wrought? and what cannot God work? He works without, and he works within, he stops or moves all the wheels of all creatures as seemeth best to him. The tongues, the hands, the hearts, the wils, the affections, the love, the hatred, the anger, the desires of all the sons of men are under his power, and at his dispose. Who would not trust in God?

Fifthly, *If we look upon our selves as creatures, and all creatures with our selves, we shall quickly find a necessity of trusting God.* As creatures are not of themselves, so not in themselves. VVe receive life from God, and in him we live. If we depart from him in whom we live, we shall surely die. Our natural, as well as our spiritual life, is preserved by the power of God. The life of man consisteth not in the abundance of that which he possesseth, but in dependence upon him in whom he believeth. *Man is not sufficient of himself (in spirituals) to think a good thought, that sufficiency is of God: and all temporal good things are not sufficient for man, their sufficiency is of God.* A horse is a vain thing to save a man, bread is a vain thing to strengthen a man; wine is a vain thing to chear a man, yea, wisdom is a vain thing to counsel a man, without God. As there is nothing which the devil doth more oppose, or God more require, so there is nothing which we more need, or by which we gain more then by trusting God: God gives himself most out to us when we trust most in him: As an act of trust gives most glory to God, so it fetcheth most good from God. Our trusting in creatures makes them vain to us; and our not trusting in God makes him (in a sence) vain to us; that is, God will not give out his strength and help, if we do not trust him: he is as one weak when we trust him weakly, he is as one empty-handed when our hearts are empty of trust.

For the advancement of this grace of *trust*, take these three rules from what we find in *Job*, whose trust was risen to such a height, that it did not only live, but was lively in the very approaches of death.

First, *Labour to know God.* *Job was a man acquainted with God, and therefore he trusted in God (Psal. 9. 10.) They that know thy Name will trust in thee.* The reason why God is trusted so little, is because he is so little known. VVe say of some men, *They are better known than trusted,* and if we knew some men more, we should trust them less: But the truth is, God is alwayes

trusted as much as he is known, and if we knew him more, we would trust him more; **every discovery of God shews somewhat which renders him more worthy of our trust.**

Secondly, *Recollect and meditate former experiences.* **The consideration of what God hath done for us keeps the heart up in trust that he will do more.**

Thirdly, *Be upright.* **That which made Job confident to trust upon God though he should slay him, was the uprightness of his heart with God. He may trust God who is faithful to God.** Job had Gods own hand to his certificate, that his heart was upright. *Beloved* (saith that beloved Disciple, *John 1. epist. 3. 21.*) *if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God.* An hypocrite may presume, but he cannot be truly confident. Besides, 'tis a dishonour to God, when they say they trust him, whose lives are dishonourable to him: They make God (as much as lies in them) a partaker in their wickedness, who pretend he will take their parts while they are wicked and do wickedly. *Railing Rabshakeh tells Hezekiah* (2 King. 18. 20, 21, 22.) *Thou sayest (but they are but vain words) I have counsel and strength for war; and when he had beaten him off from humane helps, he labours to drive him from divine help also; thou perhaps wilt say, I trust in God; If thou saist so, remember, Is not that he whose altars and whose high places Hezekiah hath taken away, and hath said to Judah and Jerusalem, ye shall worship before this Altar in Jerusalem? As if he had said, Thou trust in God? thou who hast dishonoured God, pulled down his altars, &c? Rabshakeh thought that Hezekiah had done God great disservice in destroying the altars; and if it had been so, this charge had cut off the confidence of Hezekiah: But how justly may we upbraid many that profess they trust in God, and say, Is not he the God whose name you blaspheme? the God whom you provoke? the God whose truths and waies you neglect and kick against? the God whose servants you oppose? and will you say you trust in God? For shame either disclaim your confidences or be reclaimed from your courses. **The man who walks uprightly before God may trust perfectly in God. He that contemns the command, hath no part in the promise.** We do not oblige God to do us good by our doing good; but God hath not obliged himself to do us good while we are doing evil. There are promises of grace, but there are no promises of reward to wicked men.*

Lastly,

Laſtly, Take two characters of holy truſt.

Fiſt, It takes us off from all other dependences. As a man cannot ſerve, ſo neither can he truſt *God and mammon*; As in ſpirituals, ſo in temporals, while with the Apoſtle (*Phil. 3. 3.*) *We rejoyce* (which is an effect of truſt) *in God, we have no confidence in the fleſh.* *If God be not truſted alone, he is not truſted at all.* Every thing we join with him diſjoins us from him. He that takes hold of God lets go his hold of all other things: We may uſe the help of creatures, but we muſt truſt none but God. He that (in this ſence) will needs be ſo wiſe and provident as to get two ſtrings to his bow, ſhall find, when he comes to ſhoot, that he hath not one. If we truſt God and man together, God will not help us, and man cannot.

Secondly, Holy truſt acts in all eſtates and turns: *A true obediſtance reſpects all the commandments, ſo true truſt reſpects all the diſpenſations of God.* Truſt repoſeth upon God, not only for ſome, but for, and in every thing. Some ſay they truſt God for pardon, for heaven, and for eternal life, who do not, or think they need not truſt him for the needs of this preſent life: For theſe, ſome ſuppoſe they can help themſelves, and others ſuſpect God will not ſtoop ſo low as to help them. *A true Believer depends upon God as much* (in proportion to the thing) *for a piece of bread, as for heaven; and the Lord* (in proportion to the thing) *is as careful to provide Believers with the bread of this life, as he is to give them the bread and means of eternal life.* This is truſt indeed, when we truſt God for all, for temporals as well as for ſpirituals, in the leaſt as well as in the greateſt matters: Yea, the leſs the thing is for which we truſt God, the greater is the grace of truſt. As it argues the greateſt degree of holineſs, when we will not offend God by committing the leaſt ſin, and when we are thankful to him for the leaſt mercy; ſo it argues a great degree of faith, when we depend upon God (being convinced we have need to do ſo) *for his good will in receiving the leaſt comfort, and for his ſtrength in performing the leaſt duty.* Some, when they have a great buſineſs to undergo, ſtir up themſelves to truſt God, and ſo they ought; but the ſpiritualneſs of truſt is ſeen, when in the leaſt buſineſſes we undergo, and in the leaſt duty we go about, we go out of our ſelves, and go forth in the ſtrength of God: For as it is the very ſame love of God that ſaveth us eternally, and preſerveth us tempo-

temporally, ſo it is the ſame power of God which doth great or ſmall things for us : and therefore we ſhould in all depend upon God, knowing that without him we cannot do the one, and that we ſhall be able to do all things through him ſtrengthening us. *Yea, laſtly, we muſt truſt God in our enjoyments, as well as in our wants.* It is an hard thing to ſay, *Though he ſlay me, yet I will truſt in him;* but it is harder to ſay, *Though he make me alive, yet I will truſt in him.* *It is a glorious tryal of truſt, to ſay, Should God make me not worth a groat, yet I will truſt in him;* but it is a greater glory of this truſt, to ſay, *Though God make me worth thouſands, yet I will truſt in him:* *It is hard to truſt God in a low and troubleſome eſtate, but it is harder to truſt God in a full and proſperous eſtate.* When we (to ſenſe) have the leaſt need of Gods help, then to truſt in him, and depend upon him, ſhews we are moſt ſenſible that we need his help: For by this we in one act give testimony to the Al-ſufficiency of God, and to the emprineſs of the creature; by this we make God all, and the creature nothing at all. *Faith gives a more ſpiritual diſcovery of it ſelf, when it convinces us that we are poor in the miſt of our abundance without God, then when it convinceth us that we have abundance in God, though we are poor.* 'Tis noble when we can ſay, *Though God afflict me and empty me, I will truſt in him;* but 'tis heroically Chriſtian to ſay, *Though God comfort me and fill me, I will truſt in him.* *The ſtronger we are in grace, the leſs we go, either alone, or upon the crutches of the creature.*

While I affirm this, I would not at all derogate from the excellency of *Jobs* truſt in God, I only ſhew you a more excellent way of truſting him.

But it may be queſtioned, Doth not *Job* derogate from, yea contradict his own profeſſed truſt, when with the ſame breath with which he concludes, *Though he ſlay me, yet will I truſt in him,* he concludeth alſo,

But I will maintain mine own waies before him.

In the former part of the verſe *Job* diſcovered the higheſt confidence in God. In this latter part he ſeems to diſcover too much confidence in himſelf, *but I will maintain mine own waies before him.* The Apoſtle argues the inconfiſtency of theſe two (*Rom. 11. 6.*) *If by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwiſe*
grace

grace is no more grace, but if it be of works, then it is no more grace, otherwise work is no more work. The waies of a man are his works: if he trust in God he depends on grace, if he maintain his waies he may be ſaid to depend on works. How then ſhall we reconcile *Jobs* truſting in God with his maintaining of his waies?

I answer, There is a maintaining of our waies before God, which is both a fruit of ſelf-confidence, and an argument of our departure from the grace of God. But this act of *Job* ſprang from no ſuch root, nor will it yield any ſuch fruit, as will appear in opening of the words.

But (or nevertheleſs) I will maintain.

The Original word ſignifies three things. Firſt, (As we tranſlate) to plead, diſpute and maintain a cauſe, or a poſition, as juſt and right. Secondly, To reprove. Thirdly, To correct or amend that which is amiſs, faulty and erroneous: And according unto theſe three ſignifications, the ſence of this Scripture may be given three waies. *But I will maintain*

Mine own wayes.

His waies were his works, or the manner and courſe of his life; which is therefore called our way, becauſe we paſs and repaſs up and down in it, as a man doth in a way to or from his own home.

Before him.

Or, *Before his face*, ſo the letter of the Hebrew. Which he adds, firſt, in oppoſition to men; and ſecondly, that he might more emphatically ſet forth the ſtrength of his confidence towards God. *I will maintain my waies before him: I will not only make good what I affirm to thoſe that are like my ſelf, I have not only hope to render my ſelf and my waies fair in the eye of the world; but I am aſſured that I can render both fair to the eye of God himſelf.* Some can maintain their waies well enough before men, who cannot maintain them before God; his eyes look through all their coverings and vizards; He can diſtinguiſh between appearances and realities, he can ſee a rotten heart within a painted ſkin. Holy upright *Job* was not afraid to come into the preſence of God, there to open himſelf, and to have all his waies ſcanned and examined.

Thoſe

יָכִיחַ Eſt
diſputare, hinc
ars diſputandi
quam dialeſticā,
vocant ab He-
braeis dicitur.
הוֹכִיחַ Signifi-
cat etiam cauſā
agere apud ju-
dicem, verbum
forenſe. Drul.

Those waies had need be fair and well mended which abide the survey of God himself.

I will maintain, &c. That is (according to the first signification of the word) *Though the Lord ſlay me*, yet I will ſtand to, and abide my tryal, I will not be brought to an ill opinion of my ſelf, nor will I think the worſe of my ſpiritual, internal eſtate, how much evil ſoever the Lord ſhall be pleaſed to deal to me in my outward eſtate: No, I will be as high in purſuance of what I have heretofore aſſerted, namely, that mine heart is upright with him, and my waies right (in the main) before him, when he is ſlaying me, as ever I was when he was proſpering me, or ſhall be again if he ſhould proſper me again.

Priusquam hinc beam vias meas i. e. rationes & cauſam meam arguam. Ego ſane ut perij perij, verum non continebo meipſum quin juſ meum coram illo aſſeram. Merc. Sunt confidentie verba, quod ſperet ſe cauſam ſuam probandum coram Deo ſcientis ſua innocentia. Merc.

Whence Obſerve,

First, *An upright heart keeps its grounds in all turns and times.*

Though he ſlay me, yet will I truſt in him; and not only ſo, but *I will maintain mine own waies alſo*. For as *an upright heart maintains the ſame practice of holineſs at all times*; Though there be ſlaying and killing for the name and truth of Chriſt, yet he will not change his way, nor go into a wrong way wherein perhaps he ſhall have more ſafety, by complying, and chyming in with the opinions or practices of other men. As he (I ſay) maintains his waies in regard of his preſent practice, ſo alſo in regard of his former integrity in that practice: which is the thing Job intends chiefly in this aſſertion.

Secondly, Job ſpeaks this, as an argument of his uprightneſs, *I will maintain mine own waies before him*.

Hence Note,

That it is a ſign of a heart ſound in holineſs when we can with confidence ſet our ſelves before God, and maintain what we are in his preſence.

It ſhews that a man is right when he dares come to tryal. I will diſpute it out with God himſelf, ſaith Job: not that he (as I have often ſhewed before) had an opinion that there was no ſin in him, or that God could find no faults in him: Job acted upon the principles of the Covenant of grace, and knew upon what ground he went; but (taking that in) he is reſolute to maintain his waies, and this was a proof of his uprightneſs. It is an argument that a piece of gold is weight when a man is willing to have it brought to the balance, and that it is right metal, not

not counterfeit and base, when a man is ready to offer it to the touch-stone: Try me, prove me, do what you will with me, bring me to the balance or to the touch-stone; I will maintain my waies, I doubt not but I shall be found weight and right, saith the upright soul (*Job. 3. 21.*) *He that doth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest.* **He that doth the truth is not afraid of the light;** *that will but make his deeds manifest that they are wrought in God,* as Christ speaks in that place. How are the deeds of a man wrought in God? First, thus, The deeds of the Saints are wrought in God, that is, in the strength and power of God. Secondly, They are wrought in God, that is, at the command, and by the authority of God. They that work in the power of God, and by the rule of God, *their deeds are wrought in God.* Now, *he that doth the truth comes to the light,* he loves the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God, both according to the mind of God, and by the power of God. Our deeds have no value in them, but as they are done in God: nor can we maintain any of our waies before God, but when we walk in God. We may make a flourish before men, of what is wrought in man: But what we maintain before God must be of God. See how you can put your waies before the light of Gods countenance, and debate them in his presence. It is an easie matter to carry it out with creatures: Consider what you can do with God. *I (saith Job) will maintain mine own waies before him.*

Thirdly, *I will maintain my waies,* may signifie his resolution to continue in the waies of holiness and obedience for the time to come: *Though he slay me, yet I will maintain my waies,* that is, I will not be brought out of love with holiness, though the Lord should lay me under the greatest discouragements: here is another argument of sincerity. A sound heart saith, What evil soever I find in the waies of God, I will never think ill of the waies of God: No, I will yet walk in them, I will now run in them; how hardly soever I am used in those waies, I will never out of them, though I meet with Lyons in them, though I meet with blows and troubles in them, yea, though God meet me as a Lyon in them, though I receive blows and troubles from the hand of God himself in those waies I walk, though he seem to stand there with a drawn sword to slay me, yet *I will maintain my way.* This is a truth, and true of *Job*, yet I conceive the word in the

*Non tam ad am-
teatē vite pe-
nitentiam quam
ad sequentis pu-
ritatem perti-
nere existi-
mat. Vatab.
Arguere vult
in conspectu
ejus, est dare o-
peram ut inno-
center vivat
coram illo.*

Hebrew which we render *maintain*, doth not lead us to it; and therefore (though it hath learned Assertors) I will not stay upon it.

יכח significat
etiam repreben-
dere, corrigere,
sic aliqui latini
exponunt &
referunt ad pe-
nitentiam de
vitiis antea factis
erratis.

Again, Take the word in the second sence, as it signifies to *reprove*, and then the meaning riseth somewhat different from the former, though it comes to the same issue: *I will reprove my own waies*; that is, Though I still assert my sincerity, yet I do not presume my self free from sin: I will judge my self to have failed in many things, and that the Lord might justly correct me, slay me, yea (in regard of the desert of sin) cast me to hell; thus, *I will reprove mine own waies before him*: while God is smiting me, I will be accusing my self, I will say that I have sinned, and that he doth me no wrong: I will not only acquiesce and rest satisfied in the sentence of God upon me, though it be to death, but I will also blame my self for whatsoever is blame-worthy in my heart or life. So then, he intended not any accusation of God, but an examination of himself, or a serious discussion of his course and conscience as in the sight of God.

Hence Observe,

Then when God is smiting or slaying us, we should be judging our selves, and confessing our sinfulness.

I will reprove mine own waies before him. Job did not say, I will reprove his waies, but mine own: He said not, God doth ill in slaying me, but I have often done ill in disobeying him. This is an argument of a holy heart, when in the midst of all sufferings we can acquit God, and lay load upon our selves. The Apostle assureth us (1 Cor. 11. 31.) *If we would judge our selves, we should not be judged of the Lord*: there's one truth: and yet this is as great a truth, *When we are judged of the Lord, we should judge our selves*. When we are corrected of the Lord, we should correct our selves; when he reproveth us, we should reprove our selves, and acknowledge that we are such as in whom God might find enough, not only to lay rods of correction upon us, but even scorpions of destruction. *I also will reprove my waies before him.*

Lastly, Taking the word (as some do) for *correcting*, *I will correct my own waies before him*, so there is this sence in it, *When God is slaying me, I will be thinking how to be more holy, how I may amend my own waies before him*. As if he had said, *I will not do like stubborn and rebellious ones, who when God chastens and afflicts them,*

them, they more pollute and corrupt themſelves, or do worſe and worſe: No, I would be and do better and better, I would correct my waies yet before him: I will not only maintain my waies in holineſs, as I have done, but I would put out a more pure and correct edition of my works; I would take care to have all the errata's (which I have obſerved in any page of my life) amended: and now that the Lord hath caſt me into the fire of affliction, I would come out gold, I would have all my dross purged out, and my whole lump refined. Theſe reſolves, which the ſence of the word now preſented holds out unto us, diſcover alſo much holineſs of heart. What greater diſcovery of holineſs is there, then to make the beſt improvement of the worſt eſtate, and to be mending our ſouls while our bodies are a ſlaying? Yet I conceive (according to the coherence and drift of the place) that our tranſlation renders it moſt fair, that Job notwithstanding the Lord ſhould ſlay him, would yet ſtand up with holy confidence to plead his own integrity, even in the ſight of God: *I will maintain mine own waies before him.*

But this was not all, Job might poſſibly be checkt; What? *Maintain your waies?* and that before God? yes do, ſee what you can get by it, will you plead with God? what will it advantage you? What? ſaith Job, I fear not any loſs by this courſe, and I hope to be a gainer; I am ſo far from being ſtartled with theſe fears, that I am ſetled in this aſſurance; what that was he gives in the next verſe,

Verſe 16. *He alſo ſhall be my ſalvation, for an hypocrite ſhall not come before him.*

As if he had ſaid, Never put me this doubt, that God will diſclaim me, becauſe I maintain mine own waies before him; nor do I believe that God will damn me becauſe he ſlayeth me: No, Though he ſlay me, yet I will truſt in him; and though I maintain mine own waies before him, yet he ſhall be my ſalvation.

Some render, *This ſhall turn to my ſalvation;* he will not rebuke me, much leſs condemn me, as he will thoſe who juſtify themſelves proudly, for this ſhall turn to my ſalvation; that is, he will be pleaſed with and accept of me; he will not ſay it is raſhneſs or folly, pride, or ſelf-conceit which hath ſtirred me up to maintain my waies, he will rather ſay it is the integrity and up-rightneſs of my heart, and that I have done no more then I

might, yea, no more then I ought for his glory, being thus charged as I am by you my friends: I do not distrust my cause, though you do; yea, I am settled in this perswasion, that when God hath heard my plea, he will give sentence on my side, though you are my accusers.

He also shall be my salvation.

Salvation is a large word. God is all salvations to his people, and the author of all salvation, of temporal as well as of eternal. Upon whatsoever we can write salvation, we may entitle God to it. He that is our God is the God of salvation. (Psal. 68.20.)

Sunt qui de futuro accipiunt, erit post mortem, sed ego de presenti tempore accipio. Merc. In salutem esse dicunt non ratione presentis opis sed ratione liberationis ab omnibus malis, & translationis ad beatitudinem. Coc.

But vvhhat is the salvation to vvhich Job here intitles God? Some refer it to temporal salvation. *He also shall be my salvation*, that is, he shall deliver and restore me from my present troubles; though he now slay and quite undo me, yet I believe that he vvill revive and repair me again.

Others interpret it strictly of eternal salvation; *He also shall be my salvation*, that is, though he slay me here, yet I am sure he will save me hereafter, and be my portion for ever. Three reasons rise from the text, vvhy Job should here rather be understood of eternal then of temporal salvation.

First, Because he speaks in the next clause about the presence of God, *an hypocrite shall not come before him*: coming before God (in the sence there intended) and salvation are the same; eternal salvation consists in the vision of God, *Psal. 16. 11. In thy presence is fulness of joy.*

Secondly, Because we find Job expressing little confidence, but rather much diffidence about any temporal restauration, he gave himself for a lost man as to the riches, honour and greatness of this vvorld. He had better assurance of the glory he never had, then of the greatness he once had.

Thirdly, Because he speaks here upon supposition of his being slain; take slaying strictly, for the separating of soul and body, and he that is so slain is beyond temporal salvation. For these three reasons we may conceive Job here aiming at and reaching after eternal salvation.

He also shall be my salvation.

Some connecting this clause vvith that sence of the former, *I will reprove my one waies*, give the Observation thus,

While

While we reprove our ſelves, and confeſs our ſins, our hearts may be raiſed up in confidence of the favour of God in the pardon of our ſins.

*Quamvis ad-
verſum me co-
ram Deo vias
meas tanquam
malas arguo,
ſcio tamen quod
ſententiam in
mei favorem
pronunciaturus
eſt. Bold.*

He doth not ſay, If I reprove mine own waies God will reprove me too. There are ſome reprovings of our hearts, from which we may infer, that God will reprove us much more: ſo 1 Joh. 3. 20. *If our heart condemn us, God is greater then our hearts, and knoweth all things.* 'Tis ſo, when the heart is engaged to any luſt: when ſuch a mans heart condemns him, God will condemn him a thouſand times more: a man continuing in ſin cannot ſay upon good ground, I reprove my waies, yet God ſhall be my ſalvation; yea, while ſuch reprove themſelves they may be ſure God will reprove them alſo. **Only, when we humbly acknowledge the ſinfulneſs of our waies, and forſake them, we are aſſured of mercy.** Theſe, and none but theſe have warrant from the word to ſay ſalvation belongs to them. Prov. 28. 13. *He that covereth his ſins ſhall not prosper, but whoſo confeſſeth and forſaketh them ſhall have mercy.* (1 Joh. 1. 9.) *If we confeſs our ſins, he is faithful and juſt to forgive us our ſins:* To confeſs ſin is ſelf-condemnation: God is ſo gracious that he will not condemn, ſo faithful and juſt that he will forgive thoſe that confeſs. While vve implead our ſelves, God will not be our Judge, but Chriſt will be our Advocate; hence that Goſpel-prophet encourageth drooping ſouls (Iſa. 43. 16.) *Declare, that thou maiſt be juſtified;* Declare, what ſhould he declare? Declare thine iniquity, and thou ſhalt be juſtified from all thine iniquities. The Lord alſo will be thy ſalvation.

Secondly, Take the former claufe according to our reading, *I will maintain my own waies before him; He alſo ſhall be my ſalvation.* From this connexion Obſerve.

There is a ſelf-juſtification conſiſtent with ſalvation.

Chriſt chargeth the Pharifees (Luk. 16. 15.) *Ye are they which juſtifie your ſelves before men, but God knoweth your hearts.* That is, you bear up and pride your ſelves with this, that men know no ill by you, that no man can ſay, *black is your eye,* but God can ſee *black is your heart.* They who reſt in a juſtification before men while their hearts are naught, are condemned before God. And all who juſtifie themſelves before God upon the goodneſs of their works ſhall be condemned. But though we may not juſtifie our ſelves upon the goodneſs of our works, yet they (whoſe works

works are so) may justifie themselves that their works are good. 'Tis not pride, but duty (when we are called to it) to say we are what we are, and to maintain that our waies are right, when they are right. God takes it well at our hands if we speak the most (with truth) of our selves, when others speak less then truth, or that which is not true, of us. *Self-commendation is alwaies not only uncomely, but sinful; except it come under the notion of self-vindication, or of such a self-justification as this point leads unto.* Thus we may maintain our waies before men: yea, thus (while we put our mouths in the dust, and are deeply humbled before God for the imperfections of our waies) we may maintain the uprightness of our waies before God, and be assured that he also will be our salvation.

Further, Take the words in their own compass, and we may Observe,

First, *God is the salvation of his people.*

How often do the Saints breathe out this faith, *He is our salvation!* upon this faith they live, and in this faith they die, *That God is their salvation.*

Secondly, Observe,

A thought that God is salvation to us, is consolation enough to us.

Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him; he also shall be my salvation. When Jacob lay upon his death-bed, panting and gasping for life, O God (saith he) *I have waited for thy salvation.* He could not go on blessing his sons, but he must make a parenthesis, to take a view or get a taste of this salvation. *To reflect upon our interest in the salvation of God is light to us in darkness, and life to us in the approaches of death.* To be saved by any hand carries comfort in it, much more to be saved by the hand of God: but the comfort of the Saints is yet higher; God is their salvation. We are happy enough that God saves us, but we have a further happiness, in that God is our salvation: *If God be our salvation, we are not only as safe, but (according to our measure and receptibility) as happy as God himself is.*

Thirdly, Job speaks emphatically, *He also;* he cries up the Name of God. And in this open affirmation that God is his salvation, there is a secret negation or a denial implied that salvation is in any else: As if he had said, *he, and he only; he, and none but he.*

The

The point from it is, *That none but God is able to give salvation to his people.*

Salvation belongeth unto the Lord (*Psa. 3. 8.*) The Hebrew is, *salvation unto the Lord.* Salvation is so much his, that the holy Ghost puts nothing between it and him. We supply the fence well, *Salvation belongeth unto the Lord.* And it doth not belong unto him in common with others, 'tis his property: He gives it and none else can (*Isa. 43. 11.*) *I, even I, am the Lord, and beside me there is no Saviour.* No? we find in the book of Judges, that God raised up *Saviours* to his people (*Neh. 9. 27.*) True; but, first, He never raised up any Saviour for eternal salvation but only Jesus Christ, who is also God. Secondly, They who were *temporal saviours* did not save in their own strength, and by their own power; God is said to raise them up *Saviours*, because he raised up such instruments as himself intended to save them by; it was God that saved them, though men were employed to save them; *Whosoever brings us salvation, God is the Author of it.* The Prophet concludes (*Jer. 3. 23.*) *Truly in vain is salvation hoped for from the hills, and from the multitude of mountains.* He speaks but of temporal salvation, and by hills and mountains he means the greatest means, the highest helps, the strongest hands, the wisest heads on earth, and yet he saith, *In vain is salvation hoped for from the hills and mountains;* truly God is the help of his people. It is much more vain to expect eternal salvation from any other, in vain is *soul-salvation* hoped for from hills or from the multitude of mountains, from this good work, or that good work, from hills and mountains of good works; though you pile up mountains of prayers, hills of alms, and deeds of charity, yea, though you dig the lowest valleys of humiliation, and make rivers and seas of tears with weeping, yet in vain is eternal salvation hoped for from these hills and mountains, from these valleys and seas, *Salvation is of the Lord; He also shall be my salvation.*

When Job had said, *I will maintain mine own waies before him,* Doth he say, *and they shall be my salvation?* Doth he say, my righteousness, my integrity, shall be my salvation? His waies were indeed the way to salvation, but his vvaies were not, nor did he intend them to be his *salvation.* The uprightness of our hearts, the righteousness of our waies cannot save us, Christ only is our salvation. How much soever we maintain or may be compelled

compelled (as *Job* was) to boast of our waies, yet we cannot make salvation of them, we must give that wholly to God. It is an admirable frame of heart, when we are highest in speaking for our selves or in maintaining our waies before God and man, yet then to go quite out of our waies and out of our selves. To expect all from free grace, when we have been most free at works, most active in doing, or patient in suffering for God, is the right Gospel temper.

Fourthly, Observe this from it,

That an upright heart in the worst times looks at, and hath an eye upon the best things.

Though he slay me, he shall be my salvation: With the same breath he tels us of God slaying him, and of God his salvation; he saw life in death, light in darkness, deliverances in destruction, repairs in ruine, salvation in slaying, such are the workings of a gracious heart, such the prospects of faith in the gloomiest day, in the darkest night. Faith only sees such sights as these reflected from the glass of precious promises.

Lastly, *Job* expresseth his special interest in, or relation to God, *He also shall be my salvation.*

Hence Observe,

That a Believer looks upon God himself as his salvation.

My God, my salvation. God hath (as it were) made himself over to Believers: *Job* doth not say, God will give or bestow salvation upon me; but he saith, *He shall be my salvation.* It is God himself who is the salvation and the portion of his people. *They would not much care for salvation if God were not their salvation.* It more pleaseth the Saints that they enjoy God, then that they enjoy salvation. False and carnal spirits will express a great deal of desire after salvation; O they like salvation, heaven and glory well, but they never express any longing desire after God and Jesus Christ. They love salvation, but they care not for a Saviour. Now, that which faith pitcheth most upon, is God himself; he shall be my salvation, let me have him and there's salvation enough; *He is my life, he is my comfort, he is my riches, he is my honour, and he is my all.* Thus *David's* heart acted immediately upon God, *Psal. 18. 1, 2. I love thee, O Lord, my strength, the Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer, my buckler and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower.* It pleased holy *David* more, that God was his strength, then that

that God gave him ſtrength, that God was his deliverer, then that he was delivered, that God was his fortrefs, his buckler, his horn, his high tower, then that he gave him the effect of all theſe: It pleaſed *David*, and it pleaſes all the Saints more, that God is their ſalvation (whether temporal or eternal) then that he ſaves them. The Saints look more at God then at all that is Gods. They ſay (*Non tua, ſed te*) *we deſire not thine, but thee*, or nothing of thine like thee. *Whom have I in heaven but thee?* ſaith *David* again (*Pſal. 73. 25.*) What are Saints? What are Angels to a ſoul without God? 'tis true of things as well as of perſons, What have we in heaven but God? **What's joy without God?** **What's glory without God?** What's all the furniture and riches, all the delicates, yea, and all the diadems of heaven, without the God of heaven? If God ſhould ſay to the Saints, here is heaven, take it amongſt you, but I will withdraw my ſelf, how would they weep over heaven it ſelf, and make it a *Baca*, a valley of tears indeed! **Heaven is not heaven unleſs we enjoy God.** 'Tis the preſence of God which makes heaven: *Glory is but our neareſt being unto God.* As *Mephiboſeth* replied, when *David* told him, *I have ſaid, thou and Ziba divide the land: Let him take all if he will*, ſaith *Mephiboſeth*, I do not ſo much regard the land, as I regard thy preſence; *Let him take all, for as much as my Lord the King is come again in peace to his own houſe*, where I may enjoy him. So, if God ſhould ſay to the Saints, take heaven amongſt you, and withdraw himſelf, they would even ſay, Nay, let the world take heaven if they will, let them take glory if they will, if we may not have thee in heaven, heaven would be but an earth, or rather but a hell to us. That which Saints rejoyce in, is, that they may be in the preſence of God, that they may ſit at his table, and eat bread with him, that is, that they may be near him continually, which was *Mephiboſeth* his priviledge with *David*. That's the thing, ſay they, which they deſire, and which their ſouls thiſt after; that's the wine they would drink. *My ſoul* (ſaith *David*, *Pſal. 42. 2.*) *thiſteth for God, for the living God, when* (me-thinks the time is very long, when) *ſhall I come and appear before God?* He ſpake this in the greatneſs and heat of his zeal to enjoy God in the Ordinances of his publick worſhip: How much more was his ſoul on fire to enjoy God where he ſhould be above Ordinances? The uſual ſaying of Chriſtians is, *Come, let us go to prayer, or let us go to Church; we ſhould rather*

say, Come, let us go to God. We should prize duties no further then as we obey and enjoy God in doing them: Nor should we prize heaven it self further then as we shall have there a more full and perfect enjoyment of God. *Salvation it self were no salvation without the God of salvation.* He also shall be my salvation,

But an hypocrite shall not come before him.

In this later clause Job secretly refuteth the censure of his friends, who had aspersed him as an hypocrite. Bildad did it in the 8th chapter, though not directly, by way of assertion, yet obliquely, by way of inference, while he said (vers. 13.) *The hypocrites hope shall perish and be cut off, and his trust shall be as a spiders web.* Here Job speaks that out, which no hypocrite can, I (saith he) *will maintain my waies before God, and he shall be my salvation:* 'Tis not so with hypocrites, they dare not maintain their waies before God, or if they do, they shall yet fall under the condemnation of God: Thus by way of argument, he denieth, as they by way of argument had affirmed him to be an hypocrite. Job could come where no hypocrite can.

An hypocrite shall not come before him.

The Hebrew is, *All hypocrites shall not come before him, that is, No hypocrite shall come before him.* *Not all, is often in Scripture put for none, or none at all.* David (Psal. 47. 17.) saith of the worldly rich man, *When he dieth he shall carry nothing away with him:* the Hebrew is, *When he dieth he shall not carry all away with him.* The meaning is (as we translate) he shall carry nothing at all away, he shall not carry so much as a rag away with him. So the Apostle speaks (Rom. 3. 20.) *By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in thy sight:* the Greek is, *All flesh shall not be justified in thy sight, by the deeds of the law:* the meaning is, none shall. So here, *All hypocrites, that is, No hypocrite.* I have opened something about him at the 8th chapter, and shewed there what an hypocrite is; he is one that acts another mans part, he acts a person which he is not. *An hypocrite is a wicked man in a godly mans cloaths.*

Some translate by a general word, *A wicked man shall not come before him:* Others render, *An accepter of persons shall not come before him;* he taxed his friends as such before. Two or three

Audeo coram
Deo apparere,
quod non fac-
rem si impius
& hypocrita
essem ut vos me
esse dicitis. Mer.

Non veniet in
conspetu ejus
omnis hypocrita
Heb.
Non omnis, in
sacro sermone
sepe valet
nullus.
Hypocrita
Grecis est
quod Latinis
histrio, Larva-
tus nimirum
homo, qui aliud
ipse est, & aliud
se esse simu-
lat. Sanct.
Flagitiosus.
Vatab. Impius.
Pagn.
Coram Deo do-
lus non ingre-
ditur. Sept.

three of the Rabbins (though they are somewhat hard put to it, *Hanc vocis significationem* to make out that sence of the word) are much for the later, *An acceptor of persons shall not come before him.* We render it strictly according to the proper signification of the word; yet to say a wicked man or an acceptor of persons shall not come before him, is as much as to say, an hypocrite shall not come before him: For though all wicked men, all acceptor of persons are not hypocrites (some sin and care not who sees, they sin in the very face of the sun, and *the shew of their faces* (as the Prophet speaks) *doth testifie against them.*) But (I say) though possibly some wicked men (at least in some things) are no hypocrites, yet there is no hypocrite, but he is a wicked man; therefore we shall not call either of them out of his name, though we give both or either of the names to each of them: and as their titles, so their estates are alike, we may as well say, *A wicked man*, as *An hypocrite*

Shall not come before him.

Not come before him? Whether can they go, or where can they be behind him *whose face is every where*? I answer, *To come before God*, may be understood either of this life or of the life to come. We come before God in this life, while we attend the duties and ordinances of his worship. But it may be said: Do not hypocrites come thus before God? none come more before God in that sence than hypocrites; and herein lies their hypocrisy chiefly, that they come before God in outward holy duties, and yet are so unholy in their lives, or at those duties. The Lord speaks complainingly of such an hypocritical people pressing upon him (*Isa. 58. 2.*) *This people seek me daily, they take delight in approaching to God:* Yet all this was only as a nation that did righteousness, they were not really a righteous nation. In another Prophet (*Jer. 7. 10.*) the Lord reproveth hypocrites openly, and in terms for coming before him, *Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, &c. and come and stand before me in this house?* They came so much before God, that he was put to chide them out of his presence, he could scarce stave them off. How then is it that Job saith, *An hypocrite shall not come before him*, if we understand it of this present life?

I answer, He comes not so before God; first, in regard of right, secondly, in regard of acceptance. An hypocrite hath no right

to come before God in any duty, he cannot call God father, he cannot lay claim to any promise of the covenant; or it he do, he shall not be accepted, much less suffered to see God as his salvation. Thus an hypocrite shall not come before God in this present life, though he appear often personally before him.

*Non veniet
in conspectu e-
jus ut videat
ipsum Deum in
quo ultima sa-
lus hominum
consistet, veni-
et tamen in
conspectu ejus
judicandus.
Aquin.*

Secondly, He shall not come before God in the life to come, to enjoy, or joy in his presence; he shall not see God to his comfort, but to his torment; he shall only see God as a Judge to be condemned by him, and thus he would not see him: he shall be driven to the tribunal or judgement-seat of God, but he shall not stand in judgement.

There are four expressions in Scripture, which gradually set forth the rejection of wicked men from the presence of God.

First, They shall not be admitted entrance, *Rev. 21. 17. chap. 22. 14.* *There shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, nor whatsoever worketh or maketh a lie,* that is, unholy ones shall not so much as set one foot over the threshold of that holy city. He speaks thus (*Isa. 59. 14.*) in another case, *Equity cannot enter.* It was a time wherein equity was so far from having due respect and entertainment, that justice could not so much as get in a doors: *Equity cannot enter.* The wicked shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven, they shall not have the least admittance.

Secondly, The Scripture saith, wicked men shall not stand in the presence of God (*Psal. 55.*) *The foolish shall not stand in thy sight.* David treateth there much upon the same argument that Job doth; for after he had spoken of his own acceptance with God, he adds, in a way of opposition, *the foolish shall not stand in thy sight*; though possibly he may enter, yet he shall not stand there.

Thirdly, The Scripture saith they shall not dwell with God (*Psal. 5. 4.*) *Evil shall not dwell with thee,* that is, evil men shall not, though they should be admitted entrance, though they should be suffered to stand a while before God, yet they shall not dwell with God, they shall presently pass away.

The fourth expression, is that in the text, which comes between the first and second, between entering and standing, that is, *coming before God*; *an hypocrite shall not come before him,* that is, God will not have any thing to do with him in a way of favour. Thus he is excluded totally, he shall not enter, saith one Scripture; if he doth, he shall not come before God, saith another;

ther; if he come before God, yet he shall not stand in his sight, saith a third; if he stand, yet he shall not dwell with God, saith a fourth. I might add a fifth, which saith, *He shall not inherit the kingdom of God* (1 Cor. 6. 9.) Now, in opposition to all these, the upright and holy are admitted, they have entrance into the house of God, they come before God, they stand in his sight, they dwell with him for ever, yea, they shall not only dwell as servants, or as friends, but as sons, as his first born, as heirs, all they shall inherit the kingdom of God. One of the highest priviledges promised unto *Sion* is, that a time shall come when the wicked shall not come unto her (Isa. 52. 1.) *Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city.* Wherefore must *Jerusalem*, the holy city, awake thus, and be ready in her dress, in her beautiful garments? Why, there is good news for her, *For henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean:* As if he had said, *In times of Sions defection or oppression, when there was no due reformation of worship, nor order among worshippers, then the uncircumcised and the unclean came and stood, yea, even dwelt with thee, as thy own children; but, O Jerusalem, a time shall come when the uncircumcised and the unclean shall not so much as come into thee, they shall be rejected and cast out for ever.* Prophane ones shall find no place at last in *Sion* here below, and hypocrites shall never come into the *Sion* which is above. Some hypocrites will come into the Church when she is most refined, there is no keeping of them out, till they discover themselves, and so are cast out, or apostatize, and so go out of themselves. Possibly the Church militant may be so purged and reformed at last, that as there shall be no prophane in her, so but a few hypocrites. But into the Church triumphant, we are sure the closest hypocrite shall not enter: God will wash off all the varnish and paint which they have put upon the face of their profession with rivers of brimstone, and will give them the cup of his fierce wrath to drink unto eternity.

Hence Observe,

First, *Hypocrites are the worst of wicked men.*

Every wicked man is not bad enough to be called an hypocrite. Hypocrites are the chief of sinners, not only the children, but the first-born of the Devil. We may wrong a wicked man by calling him an hypocrite, but we cannot wrong any hypocrite by

by thinking him all that's wicked. The Moralist saith, *When you have said, a man is ungrateful, you have said all that is ill of him.* I am sure when we have said a man is an hypocrite, we have said all that's ill of him, and have called him, not only (as we say) *all to nought*, but *all that's naught*. To do wickedly, or to be wicked is bad enough; but to do wickedness under pretence of goodness, or for a man whose heart tells him he is wicked, to pretend to goodness, this is abominable. An hypocrite is not worse than other wicked men, because he alwaies hath more sin than they, but because he hides his sin: Nor doth the greatness of his sin lie simply in this, because he hides how sinful he is, but because he appears holy, which he is not; that he seems to be good is worse then his being really bad. That satan is the prince of darkness, speaks not so much ill of him, as this, that *he transforms himself into an Angel of light*. An hypocrite never doth good out of love to God, but out of design for himself. He thinks he can impose upon God, and mock him as one man mocks another, he makes God an idol, as if he had eyes and could not see, or had no eyes to see his waies, nor understanding to search into his heart. And to shew that hypocrites are the worst of sinners they are sentenced to the worst of punishments. *An hypocrite shall not come before him*, saith Job here, how great a punishment that is, will appear in the next observation. When Christ would express the forest judgment upon any sort of sinners, he tells them *they shall have their portion with hypocrites and unbelievers*, (Mat. 24. 51.) implying that the judgement passed upon hypocrites is the most dreadful judgement. Now, if the judgement of an hypocrite be the greatest judgment, then the sin of an hypocrite is the greatest sin; for *the justice of God takes the measure of punishment by the measure of sin*. As every sin deserves punishment, so ever, where the punishment is greater, the sin is greater, either in the matter, or in the circumstances of it. Hypocrites are (as one glosseth this text in *Matthew*) the free-holders of hell, other sinners are but as inmates with them, and have but a portion of their misery. Now, as that by which other things are proportioned and measured is a perfect measure, and that by which other things are weighed is a perfect weight in its kind: so that by which the greatest misery is weighed and measured, is the most perfect misery in its degree; Seeing then the weight and measure of that misery which rests upon an hypocrite is used by

by God himſelf to weigh and meature out the miſery of thoſe who ſhall have the greateſt miſery, therefore the miſery of an hypocrite is the greateſt, which clearly argues what is here aſſerted, that his ſin is alſo greateſt.

Secondly, Conſider in what the puniſhment of the hypocrite doth conſiſt: *Job* doth not ſay, *an hypocrite ſhall be caſt to hell*, and tormented in that lake with fire and brimſtone (which yet other Scriptures ſay) but here *Job* ſaith only, *an hypocrite ſhall not come before him*. (He ſhall be baniſhed out of the preſence of God.) This is his puniſhment.

Hence Obſerve,

That, the puniſhment of loſs is a very great puniſhment, one of the greateſt if not the greateſt puniſhment. Sinful man falls under a twofold puniſhment, 1. of loſs, 2. of ſenſe. Many diſpute which of theſe is the greateſt, and moſt determine that the puniſhment of loſs is greater then that of ſenſe. This is the puniſhment of an hypocrite, *he ſhall not come before God.* **This loſs is a great puniſhment in this life: not to enjoy God by faith in Ordinances, promiſes and diſpenſations, is the great miſery of man; hypocrites are denied this enjoyment.** For though they come before God (as I ſaid before) and preſs into his preſence, to worſhip him, though they challenge the promiſes, and are apt to flatter themſelves that God is with them in providential diſpenſations, yet they have no acceptance with him. **God denyeth them his preſence: they come to God, but God doth not come to them, though they talk of the covenant and lay hold of it, yet it is with a falſe finger, and God reproveth them for their boldneſs and uſurpations.** (*Pſal. 50. 16.*) *Unto the wicked God ſaith, what haſt thou to do to declare my ſtatutes, or that thou ſhouldeſt take my covenant into thy mouth, ſeeing thou hateſt inſtruction and caſteſt my words behind thee?* I grant, an hypocrite may have ſome ſluſhes of the preſence of God in Ordinances and duties, and that's his heaven. This the Apoſtle calls his *taſte of the good word of God, and of the powers of the world to come* (*Heb. 6. 5.*) he may have ſome railings, yea, ſuppoſed raviſhings of Spirit at the report and ſight of heavenly things: but his taſte of theſe is not ſpiritual, but ſenſitive only, ſuch as the underſtanding gives in to the affections upon any rational diſcourſe or demonſtration of objects pleaſing to the nature of man: any higher enjoyment of God then this the hypocrite taſteth not. And uſually he prayeth, and heareth with-

out

out any fence of these. He doth nothing with God, while he hath to do with him : and here is his punishment, though he be not sensible of it now, but he shall be sensible of it in the life to come. As he shall not come before God for ever, so he shall know the meaning of it, what it is not to come before him. Carnal men lightly esteem the presence and enjoyment of God, yea, they are glad when they are out of his presence. Few know when God is near them or when he is far off, what his departures mean, or what his returnings. They who know these things, count his presence their greatest gain, and his absence their greatest loss. When God sentenced *Cain* for the murdering of his brother, he complains chiefly of this (*Gen. 4. 14.*) *Thou hast driven me out this day from thy face, or from thy presence.* And what was that? It was but the common presence of God in ordinances. *Cain* had been offering sacrifice, and God did not accept him; he could not go from the universal presence of God, and he was not at all admitted to his comfortable presence, yet he looked upon it as his greatest misery, that he was deprived of his common presence in public worship, from which he was as a person excommunicated. *I am driven out from thy face:* When *Saul* could not get an answer from God, neither by dreams, nor by urim, nor by prophets. This he represents as the worst of his afflictions (*1 Sam. 28.*) To be shut out from the sight or society of a man whom we much esteem, is exceeding afflictive. Though *Absalom* was reconciled to *David* his father, so far as to be admitted to come to the city, yet because *David* gave order that *Absalom* should not see his face, nor come to court, he could not bear it, but resents this restraint so passionately, that he sends to *Joab*, and bespeaks him thus: *Wherefore am I come from Geshur? It had been good for me to have been there still; now therefore let me see the Kings face, and if there be any iniquity in me let him kill me* (*2 Sam. 14. 24. 34.*) as if he had said, I cannot satisfy my self with my liberty in *Jerusalem*, if I stand excluded from the Kings presence. I had rather die then endure this piece of banishment. How then will hypocrites be tormented with an eternal banishment from the face of God! It is the greatest tryal that the Saints have in this life, when they lose the sight of God by faith, when they come before God, and cannot find God, when God covers himself with a cloud (as the Church complains) that they cannot come at him, that is the hardest exercise of the Saints in this life. And O how they are

are refreshed, when God returns and comes in to their ſpirits, when he ſheds his love abroad into their hearts by the holy Ghoſt. This is heaven upon earth; and of this they ſay, as the Diſciples at the tranſfiguration of Chriſt upon the mount (*Mat. 17.*) *It is good to be here.* When the Lord Jeſus perceived a vail drawn between him and his father, and that (while he was ſuffering for the ſin, and by the malice and wrath of man) he ſuffered alſo an eclipse (though he knew it was not a total one, and would be but a ſhort one) of the light of his Fathers face, how did he cry out (who never ſhrunk nor opened his mouth at the ſcourges and crown of thorns, at the ſpittings and buffetings, at the nails and ſpear which tortured his bleſſed body, how did he cry out, I ſay,) at this ſhort deſertion, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* (*Matth. 27. 46.*) Hence take a ſcantling of thoſe torments which ſhall vex hypocrites in hell, who ſhall be made to know fully (which they have here ſlighted) what the comfortable preſence of God means, and yet ſhall ſee themſelves ſhut out from it, without the leaſt hope of any enjoyment. And that which will make the ſuffering of this loſs moſt torturing and inſufferable, is, that they ſhall ever be thinking of it. If a man could forget his loſſes, how great ſoever they are, they would be only a private evil to him, not an afflictive evil; but to be ever thinking of our loſſes, is to us worſe than the loſs it ſelf. Now, wicked men ſhall ever be poring upon the loſs of heaven in hell, and caſting up the ſum of it, though they cannot exactly make out the ſum. This will be the ſting of all their ſorrows, and the very head of that poiſon'd arrow which ſhall drink up their ſpirits. And this ariſes two waies, firſt, from the very conduct of nature, which alwaies leads our thoughts to, and faſtens them upon our loſſes. As where the pain is, there we point with the finger; ſo where the loſs is, there we dwell with our thoughts. Secondly, This ariſes inevitably from the juſtice of God, who having prepared this as the hypocrites puniſhment, will irrefiſtably hold his thoughts and his loſs together; ſo that it ſhall not be in his power to lay them aſide or ſuſpend them for one moment. From all theſe conſiderations let the hypocrite underſtand the terrour of this ſentence, that he ſhall not come before God.

If any ſhall object, How can hypocrites be ſaid to loſe this preſence of God, ſeeing they never enjoyed it?

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I

I answer, We may be ſaid to loſe a thing three waies. 1. As having had and poſſeſſed it before; thus hypocrites do not loſe the preſence of God. 2. We may be ſaid to loſe that which hath been offered and tendered to our enjoyment: and 3. That which we have hoped to enjoy: In theſe two later ſences, hypocrites loſe the preſence of God, together with all the bleſſed concomitants of it. For ſalvation hath been offered unto them, and they have profeſſed, yea, poſſibly, they have had ſtrong hopes that they ſhould be ſaved. Whence elſe is that challenge of admittance (*Matth. 7. 22.*) *Many ſhall ſay unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, &c.* to whom Chriſt will profeſs, *I never knew you, depart from me ye workers of iniquity.*

Again, *An hypocrite ſhall not come before him;* Then, who ſhall come before him? Take the answer to this queſtion, from the mouth of Chriſt himſelf (*Matth. 5. 8.*) *Bleſſed are the pure in heart, for they ſhall ſee God.* And the Apoſtle's negative, *Without holineſs no man ſhall ſee the Lord,* may be reſolved into this affirmative, *Holy ones ſhall ſee the Lord, the holy one;* they ſee God here in a glaſs darkly, and they ſhall ſee him face to face clearly in heaven. *The reaſon why we ſee ſo little of God in the glaſs of Ordinances and promiſes, is becauſe there is ſo much unholineſs in our hearts:* The hypocrite cannot ſee him at all; and the ſincere cannot ſee much of him, becauſe remaining corruption ſtands between God and them hindring their ſight. When we ſhall ſee God as he is, we ſhall be like him; and as we grow now to a clearer ſight of him, we ſhall alſo grow into a fuller likeneneſs with him.

Laſtly, For as much as *an hypocrite ſhall not come before him,* We learn,

That there is no coming before God without Chriſt.

The reaſon why an hypocrite ſhall not come before God, is becauſe he cannot bring Chriſt with him, he comes in his own name, and therefore receives nothing from God but frowns or a command to depart and be gone. Through Chriſt we have *acceſs with boldneſs to the throne of grace,* and we may ſpeak to God as to a friend: but they who come boldly before God without Chriſt, come preſumptuouſly, not believingly; and ſhall find, that fool-hardineſs, not faith, hath acted them up to ſuch a confidence. For as *no man can come unto Chriſt, except the Father*

Father draw him, ſo none can come unto the Father unleſs Chriſt bring him. Chriſt takes his people (as it were) by the hand, and leads them unto his Fathers throne. As when a poor ſuiter comes to preſent ſome requeſt to a great King, he (poſſibly) dares not come near, till the favourite, or ſome eminent officer of the Court brings him up. 'Tis ſo here: but as for the hypocrite he may ſtay long enough at the door, before Chriſt vouchſafe to bring him to his Father; and if he ſhall be ſo impudent as to come alone, Chriſt will quickly turn him back. Man cannot come immediately before God: the hypocrite is out of the Mediator, and therefore *an hypocrite ſhall not come before him.*

J O B Chap. 13. Verſ. 17, 18, 19.

Hear diligently my ſpeech, and my declaration with your ears.

Behold now, I have ordered my cauſe, I know that I ſhall be juſtified.

who is he that will plead with me? for now if I hold my tongue, I ſhall give up the ghhoſt.

J O B had made his preface, and called for attention, at the 6th verſe of this chapter. *Hear now my reaſoning, and hearken to the pleadings of my lips.* Having ſpoken a little, he makes a new preface, and again calls up their attention, *Hear diligently my ſpeech, and my declaration with your ears.*

There are two parts in this ſecond preface.

In the firſt, he requireth a fair hearing from his friends, which, with ſome interpoſitions of his growing confidence, is contained in theſe three verſes.

In the ſecond, he deſireth a fair hearing from God, *verſ. 20, 21, 22.*

In this part of the preface directed to his friends, he calls for attention in general, at the 17th verſe, *Hear diligently my ſpeech.* And ſhews a two-fold ground of it, *verſ. 18, 19.*

Fiſt, From the goodneſs of his cauſe, and the clearneſs of his conſcience, at the 18th verſe, *Behold now, I have ordered my*
O O O 2 *cauſe,*

cause, I know that I shall be justified. A man that is sure he hath a good cause, cares not who hears it, only he would have it well heard.

Secondly, He giveth another ground from his own necessity, he must be heard he shall die else; in the later part of the 19th verse, *Who is he that will plead with me? for if now I hold my tongue, I shall give up the ghost.*

Hear diligently my speech.

Job had found his friends unequal hearers, and therefore he begs a better hearing; and to prepare their attention for it, he laies about him (as we use to say) thick and threefold, *Hear diligently my speech, and my declaration with your ears.*

Hear diligently.

Audiendo audite. Attentionem ab iis non qualemcumq; sed maximam efflagitat.

The Hebrew is; *Hearing, hear*, that is, *Be sure you hear when you hear.* As if he had said, *It is not any kind of attention which will serve my cause, you must give attentive diligence and diligent attention to my words.* The doubling of the word imports two things, either first, that his friends were unwilling to hear; or secondly, that what he had to speak was of very great importance, such as might justly command a double hearing. *Hear diligently my speech,*

And my declaration.

Enigmata. Vulg.

*אמרת
א חה*

Patefecit, ostendit, quæ significatio est omnino contraria enigmati, indicationem planam & minime ambiguum denotans.

The Vulgar reads it, *My dark speeches*: But there is no light at all in the Original, leading them to translate *dark speeches*. They say it is because Job speaks about a difficult point, or the riddles of providence, shewing how the Lord had afflicted the innocent, and yet is himself just. These indeed are *hard sayings, dark speeches*, and we may grant that there is a darkness in the matter, a depth and a mysteriousness in what he was about to speak. But Job's design was to speak plain, not in parables; to speak in the sun, not in the clouds. And the Hebrew word, in its native importance, is to open or explain, to set a thing forth in lively colours: Which signification is altogether inconsistent with that of the Vulgar, which reads, *Hear my riddle, or my dark speech.* Besides, the word [declaration] signifies a grave and a weighty speech, a speech which is not froth'd out with light words, nor wrapt up in obscure meanings, but is bottomed upon reason,

reason, and ordered with the clearness of discretion. Further, the word (*declaration*) is conceived to be a *law term*, for he speaks afterwards of pleading, *who will plead with me?* I will make my declaration. In law suits the Plaintiff puts in a declaration of his grievance: so saith Job, *Hear now my speech, and my declaration with your ears.* I am at the bar, let my declaration be read for the opening of my cause.

*Vox ista grav-
quoddam dictū
& sententiam
notati dignam
in portat, atq; in
hoc loco ad forū
pertinere puta-
verim. Bold.*

With your ears.

The ear is the Organ of hearing, and that only we have nothing to hear with but the ear; why then doth he say, *hear my declaration with your ears?* when if they heard it at all, they must hear it with their ears. I answer, This is but an enforcement of what he said before, *hear diligently*, that is, *hear with your ears*, be sure you hear, set your ear to work upon it, take heed how you hear, or, in hearing be sure you hearken. So in the new Testament often, *he that hath an ear to hear let him hear*, which is as much as this, let him hear with his ears, that is, let the ear do its work, and not be idle. Every man that hath ears hath not an ear to hear. Most are like the Idols of the heathen, who have ears, but hear not. **All ears are shut till Christ bores them to a saving hearing of the word.** Till the heart be opened the ear is deaf, and cannot hear to purpose. Further, take this rule. *It is a heightning of the sence of what we say, when we put the Organ and the act together, and joyn them which cannot be severed.* So, when we hear one say, *I saw it with mine eyes*, we know he could not see but with his eyes; yet thus he speaks to note the certainty and clearness of the sight he had of such a thing. And thus, *I heard it with mine ears*, I heard it certainly, fully, and attentively. Such is the meaning of Job in this admonition to his friends, *hear diligently my speech, and my declaration with your ears.*

Hence, (considering the state of Job when he called for this hearing) Observe,

That a man in affliction desires to be heard with much attention.

He that can hardly speak for attending upon his own pains, would fain have others attend to his speech; he would not have his words lost when they come drencht and bedewed with his own tears and bloud. The affliction of others should move us to hear them, and they that are in affliction will be sure to put it as a motive why they should be heard. And that's one reason why times of affliction are such special seasons of prayer to God.

Is.

Is any among you afflicted? let him pray, Jam. 5. 13. As he hath reason to pray then, because of his own need, so he hath an encouragement to pray then, because he may have stronger hopes to speed. God hears at all times with his ears when we pray with our hearts, but his ear is quickest; when our wants are sharpest. Afflictions do sometimes hinder us from hearing counsel, yea, afflictions hinder some from hearing comforts (*Exod. 6. 9.*) *And Moses spake so unto the children of Israel* (what spake he? Not the law which called them to obedience, but a promise which called them out of bondage;) *but they hearkned not unto Moses for anguish (or straightness) of spirit, and for cruel bondage.* Their bondage suffered them not to hear of their deliverance out of bondage. But though affliction hinders many from hearing both counsel and comfort, yet they who are in affliction think all bound to hear their complaints.

Secondly, In that *Job* calls so often for attention (for I told you this was his second preface: at the 6th verse he bids them hear and hearken, now he bids them hear again.)

Hence Observe,

They who are at ease themselves are seldome so sensible as they ought of those that are in misery.

Their pains, their prayers, their tears, are not laid to heart as they ought. The ground upon which the Apostle assures the Saints that they shall be heard when they cry to Christ, when they make declarations of their miseries and sorrows before his throne, is, his sensibleness of their sorrows, (*Heb. 4. 13.*) *We have not an high Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin:* Christ was under temptations, he feelth ours, because he had many of his own to feel. But they who never had experience of sorrows know not how to hear, especially not how to hear diligently the cries of those that are in sorrow. See more of this at the fifth verse of the twelfth chapter. Here I shall only add, that there are two sorts of men who are ill hearers. First, Such as enjoy worldly pleasures and contentments to the full. Secondly, They who are over-full or intangled with worldly cares and businesses: both these are very ill hearers. And hence I conceive that Proverb (among us) hath its original, when a servant, or any other we have to do with, regards not or forgets what we say; we say to such *surely you hear with your harvest ears.*

Harvest

Harvest time is a time of great pleasure, and a time of great business: and so the meaning of the Proverb is, you hear as if you were taken up with some other delights or affairs. Most hear the word of God with *harvest ears*, and that's the reason we have so ill a seed time for the word. While we are sowing the word, most men are in the harvests of their worldly contents and cares, and therefore their harvest in holiness is very small, if any: Most who bring forth fruit, bring forth but very little; and very many bring forth none at all, and all upon this account,

Thirdly, Observe, *Job*, though but a man, yet (you see) he expects to be heard: Now,

If a man speaking to men takes it ill if he be not heard, how ill may God take it if men will not hear when he speaks? We put God to many of these prefaces: the Prophets of old, seldom, if ever, came with a message from God, but they begin with, *Thus saith the Lord*, or, *Hear what the Lord saith*, &c. Christ in the Gospel and in his Epistles to the Churches (*Rev. 2. 3.*) repeats this often. *He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear.* So (*Psa. 81. 13.*) *O that my people had hearkened unto me*: and *vers. 8.* *Hear, O my people, and I will testify unto thee.* Thus God calls for, yea, even begs for hearing. Its a strange condescension, that he should stand wishing for our attention, who (upon the highest terms of sovereignty) may command our attention. Besides, God hath no need that we should hear him, he doth not speak to us for our help, or to supply his wants. *If he were hungry he would not tell us, for the world is his and the fulness of it* (*Psa. 50. 12.*) Now, if we take it ill that men will not hear us, when we are hungry to feed us, or when we are weak to help us, how much more may God take it ill at our hands when we will not hear him, who only commands us to our duty, or counsels us for our good. We are apt to think much if God do not speedily hear our prayers, and grant our requests: what cause do we give God to be angry when we will not hear his precepts nor hearken to his laws? And yet the Lord, instead of anger, expresses sometimes nothing but compassion when he is not heard. *O that my people had hearkened unto me!* God is much dishonoured when he is not heard, and yet he pities those who do not hear him.

Fourthly, *Hear diligently my speech, and my declaration with your ears.* Hence Observe,

Weighty and extraordinary matters must be heard with more than ordinary spirits.

Luk.

Luk. 8. Take heed how you hear. There is as much danger in hearing ill, as there is benefit and comfort in hearing well. And according to the concernment of the word we hear, ought to be our heed in hearing. *He that hears the word of life, had need to hear for life.*

Fifthly, Observe,

It is not unuseful often to stir up our auditors to attention.

Job makes more prefaces than one to be heard, and he doth more than speak; when he speaks to be heard he speaks passionately. The Preacher tels us, *that, if the iron be blunt, and a man do not whet the edge, he must put to more strength* (*Eccl. 10. 10.*) so we may say in this case, if our hearers are dull, and we do not whet their edge, we must put more strength to it; or rather, we lose all our strength, how much soever we put to it. When spirits are low and dead, we must speak to raise and quicken them, or else we speak in vain to instruct or reprove them. We say in our Proverb, *A whet is no let.* He that is whetting his sithe mows no grass, and yet he shall mow little unless he whet. There is as much work done in preparing the instruments with which we work, or the objects upon which we work, as there is in doing the work it self.

Lastly, Observe,

That good duties must not only be done, but be done diligently.

Hear diligently my words. We must not only pray, but pray diligently: not only love God, but love him with all our strength and with all our heart. The manner in which we perform a duty is as much to our acceptance as the matter of the duty, *Eccl. 9. 10. Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.* It is very commendable, in our worldly or special callings, to do what we do with our might: but especially when we are about the things of God, which concern our heavenly or general calling, then whatsoever we do, *let us do it with our might; when you hear, hear with all your might; when you pray, pray with all your might.* (*Jer. 48. 10.*) *Cursed be he that doth the work of the Lord deceitfully:* we put in the margin, *negligently*, according to the letter of the Hebrew: and those two words may very well interpret one another; for he that doth a thing deceitfully, doth it negligently; and he that doth it negligently doth it deceitfully: he doth it as if he would deceive God or men, or both; but at last he

he deceiveth his own soul. Therefore saith *Job*, *Hear diligently my speech, and my declaration with your ears.*

Job having thus renewed his preface for an attentive hearing, proceeds to give them reasons why he would be heard thus attentively. We have the first in the 18. verse.

Verse 18. *Behold now I have ordered my cause, I know that I shall be justified.*

My business is ready, I have ordered all things, therefore I would be heard. *When we have made great preparations we do not love disappointments.* As when the King (in the Parable) sent out saying, *my supper is ready, I have kild my oxen and my fatlings, and all is prepared, come to the marriage, and they began all to make excuse, he was wroth.* When a feast is provided and set upon the table, and the invited guests come not, who can take it well? 'Tis so in all other preparations, and this is *Job's* argument: *Hear diligently my speech, I do not call for attention having nothing to say, or nothing worth the hearing, I have ordered my cause.*

I have ordered.

The word signifieth to order with reason, to methodize things, it is applyed to the marshalling of Armies, and so to words or things wherein skill and art are shewed.

My cause.

The Hebrew [*Mizpat*] hath a three-fold use. It signifies, First, a dispute between parties. Secondly, the sentence of the Judge. Thirdly, the execution of the sentence. In this place the word is taken in the first sence, for the setting and stating of controversie about which parties are to plead or dispute. *Behold I have ordered my cause*, as if he had said, *I am not come unprepared to this bar; though you through ignorance or prejudice mistake my condition, yet I have examined it, and purely considered mine own cause, and upon good grounds I have concluded with my self, that notwithstanding all mine afflictions God hath not punished me for my sin, but still accounts me innocent and righteous.* So the words carry that rejoycing which *Job* had in the integrity of his heart, and goodness of his cause, he having thoroughly weighed and digested what he had to speak. All things being thus ready, he made no

My significat quicquid certa ratione & ordine disponitur, ut acies, &c.

מִצְפָּת tria continet, 1. rationes litigantium. 2. sententiam judicis. 3. executionem sententie. Ra. b. Sal. Ad causam meam disputandam compareo sic in vestris criminationibus absolutum iri non dubitem. Bez.

question but to go away with victory, and get the day after a full hearing. *I know I shall be justified,*

I know.

We may distinguish of a three-fold knowledge.

First, Notional or speculative, which is the work barely of the understanding. Of that I conceive the Apostle speaks (1 Cor. 8. 7.) *Knowledge puffeth up.* There is a knowledge swimming in the brain, which hath some light, but no heat, much wind, but no nourishment in it.

Secondly, There is an experimental knowledge seated in the heart, and visible in the life: The Samaritans profess this (Joh. 4. 42.) *Now we believe, not because of thy saying, for we have heard him our selves, and know that this is indeed the Christ,* that is, we are experimentally convinced by what we have heard and seen, that *this is He.* (Eccles. 8. 5.) *Whoso keepeth the commandment shall know no evil* (so the Hebrew) we translate it, *he shall feel no evil,* that is, he shall not have an experimental knowledge of evil. A man that keepeth the commandment knoweth what is evil, or else he could not do that which is good; but he that *keepeth the commandment shall know no evil,* that is, he shall not feel any evil. So we are to understand that of the Apostle (2 Cor. 5. 21.) where he saith, that *Christ knew no sin*; shall we think that Christ died for he knew not what? He died to take away sin, and did not he know what sin was? Yes, Christ knew fully what sin was, he knew what the nature, and what the effects of it were: but he knew no sin experimentally, he felt no sin in his own heart, he acted no sin in his life. We say to a man that liveth in prosperity, *You never knew poverty*; and to an healthy man, *You never knew sickness.* This is experimental knowledge.

There is a third kind of knowledge, which we call *fiducial*, when the heart cleaveth to, or is ascertain'd of what we know. Of this we are to understand the Apostle *John* (1 Ep. 2. 3.) *And hereby do we know that we know him.* To know that we know, is to be assured that we know. And again, in the fifth chapter of the same Epistle, vers. 13. *These things have I written to you that believe on the Name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life.* We may believe, and yet not know that we shall live, much less that we have eternal life. Many have a
vital

vital act, who have not a fiducial act of faith: and therefore, while the Apostle in this verſe, ſaith, *I have written unto you that believe on the Name of the Son of God*, he alſo ſaith, *I have written, that ye may believe on the Name of the Son of God*. If they did believe before, why doth he write unto them that they might believe? They had the faith of adherence and recumbence, but he deſires to raiſe and heighten them to the faith of evidence and aſſurance. Such a faith the Apoſtle expreſſeth (2 Cor. 4. 14.) *Knowing that he which raiſed up the Lord Jeſus, ſhall raiſe us up alſo by Jeſus, and ſhall preſent us with you.* (*Knowing this*) How did the Apoſtle know this? Not barely by ſpeculation, not at all by experience, for he was not yet raiſed up: But he was aſſured of it, as if it had been already done, *that he which raiſed up the Lord Jeſus, ſhall raiſe us up alſo by Jeſus*.

When Job ſaith, *I know I ſhall be juſtified*, his was not a ſpeculative knowledge, but partly an experimental knowledge, for he found that he was already juſtified, and partly a fiducial knowledge; *I know*, that is, I am ſure that the Lord will juſtify me, and that I ſhall depart from this bar acquitted in this controverſie. He doth not ſay, I know that I have not ſinned, but I know that I ſhall be juſtified from my ſin, and not only carry this preſent cauſe, but continue in the love and gracious acceptance of God for ever.

I know I ſhall be juſtified.

Justification is the declaring of a man to be juſt: He is juſt, not only who hath no ſin, but he who is acquitted from his ſin, or to whom his ſin is not imputed. He is righteous whom God pronounceth righteous, though in himſelf ungodly, for God juſti-
fieth the ungodly, Rom. 4. 5. Job knew he was thus juſtified; yet I conceive the juſtification ſtrictly intended here, is the determination of the queſtion between him and his friends on his ſide; which yet reached his total ſtanding in a ſtate of juſtification. This he oppoſeth to what he had affirmed of the hypocrite in the former words, *An hypocrite ſhall not come before him*, that is, he ſhall not be juſtified, but I know that I ſhall be juſtified.

Hence Obſerve,

Fiſt, *That a godly man, even in this life, may arrive at aſſurance that he is, and ſhall continue in a good, in a juſtified condition.*

*Justus invenit
provinciarum
Justi esse nihil
aliud importat
quam in causa
obtinere & a
judice sententi-
am in favorem
accipere.
Justus invenit-
tur in judicio,
non qui culpa
caveat, sed qui
justus declara-
tur. Sanct.*

It is good to be justified, but it is better to know that we shall be justified. There are three great graces spoken of by the Apostle (1 Cor. 13. 13.) *Faith, Hope, and Love*: And the Scripture holds out an assurance in reference to every one of these. First, The assurance of faith (Heb. 10. 22.) *Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith*. This assurance of faith hath a double respect: first, to our persons; secondly, to our services, that in both we are pleasing unto God. Secondly, There is an assurance of hope (Heb. 6. 11.) *We desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence, to the full assurance of hope unto the end*. Faith hath an eye to the truth of the promise; Hope to the good of the promise; and the assurance of hope is, that we shall certainly receive that good. Thirdly, There is also an assurance of love (1 Joh. 4. 18.) *Perfect love casteth out fear*. How is love made perfect, and how doth it cast out fear? Herein (saith the 17th verse) *is love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgement, because as he is so are we in this world*; that is, as his love is sincere to us, so is ours to him (according to our measure) even in this life, and this gives us boldness or assurance that all shall go well with us in the day of judgement, or in the next life; and so this love casteth out all fear of condemnation in that day; which fear, where it remains (as the Apostle concludes) *hath torment*, then which nothing is more contrary to assurance. In perfect love there is no torment, because there is no fear; and there is no fear, because there is an assurance of the love of God. In this love the soul doth repose, rest and delight in it self. There is a fourth thing spoken of, to which also assurance is annexed. (Col. 2. 2.) *The full assurance of understanding*: This is the clearness of our apprehension about the things which we believe, and upon which we fasten by faith and love. The light of the understanding shining upon the mysteries of the Gospel, and mixing with our other graces, bottoms the soul upon the strongest foundation, and raiseth it up to the highest pinnacle of assurance. We may say of assurance, in reference unto these *four graces*, as Philosophers do of the heavens, in reference to the *four elements*; they tell us the heavens are neither earth nor ayre, neither fire nor water, but they are a quintessence, or a fifth essence. So we may say, assurance is neither faith nor hope, nor love nor knowledge, but it is a fifth thing, sublimated and raised, either out of or above all these: it is somewhat of each of these, but more then all these.

I know that I shall be justified, is more than knowledge or love, or hope or faith, even the result of them all in their best perfections. Knowledge above knowledge is the assurance of understanding: Faith above faith is the assurance of faith: Hope and love above hope and love are the full assurance of hope and love made perfect. This is called by the Apostle (*Rom. 4.*) *A full persuasion.* Abraham (saith the text, *vers. 21.*) *being fully persuaded.* It is a Metaphor taken from ships that come into an harbour with full sail; so doth the soul sometimes: it comes into the port of a heavenly peace with full sail, with top and top gallant (as we use to say) with all the sails spread, and colours flying. So it was with Abraham, there was not any sail of his soul but was filled with the wind of assurance. This is called (*Joh. 14. 21.*) the manifestation of Christ to the soul: *He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me, and he that loveth me shall be loved of my father, and I will love him and manifest my self to him.* Christ is manifested to many by the reading and preaching of his word, but he manifests himself only unto some by the light and influences of his Spirit. The former is common to all who live within the sound of the Gospel; the later is the sole priviledge of those who obey the Gospel; nor do all these receive this priviledge now, very few enjoy it at all times. Christ loves many a soul to whom he doth not presently manifest his love. God hath love laid up in his heart for all his, but he doth not shed his love abroad into all their hearts by the holy Ghost (*Rom. 5. 8.*) The first fruits of the Spirit (*Rom. 8. 23.*) The witness of the Spirit (*vers. 16* of that chapter) The sealing of the Spirit (*Eph. 1. 14.*) The earnest of the Spirit (*2. Cor. 5. 5.*) are not bestowed upon every believer at all times, and not sensibly upon some at all in this life: And all these are but several expressions of this one thing, our knowing that we shall be justified: Yet in this many of the Saints have gloryed before they came to glory. Habakkuk had it in the height, so had many of the old Worthies, *Hab. 1. 13, 35.* Though their Gospel-light was not so clear as the Gospel-light after Christ came, yet they saw the promises afar off, they imbraced them, and were persuaded of them, by these three steps of seeing, embracing and persuasion, they ascended to an assurance or knowledge that they should be justified. But some may say, these were extraordinary men, can ordinary believers attain or know this?

All do not know it, but all may. There are but some believers who reach this perfection, yet all should be aiming at and reaching after it. And though they were extraordinary men in whom the Scripture gives instance, Such as *Abraham, Habakkuk, Paul, &c.* yet as the Apostle saith of some under eminent temptations, (*1 Cor. 10. 13.*) *There hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man,* so we may say of those who attained those eminent consolations, there is no consolation hath been given unto those but what is common to believers. For as few men fall into all those temptations which are common to man; so few believers attain all those consolations which are common to believers. Some are slothful, and will not give diligence to make their calling and election sure, others cannot find it sure to them (though it be in it self) notwithstanding all their diligence.

If any object further, that of the Apostle (*Rom. 11. 20.*) *Be not high-minded, but fear.*

I answer, That *fear is a duty, which is opposed to high-mindedness; but that fear is, at least, an affliction, which is opposed to steadfastness.* Again, this is not spoken to nourish doubting whether we are justified or no, but to preserve us from presumption when we are justified. So we may answer those places (*Prov. 28. 14.*) *Blessed is the man that feareth alwaies;* (*Phil. 2. 12.*) *Work out your salvation with fear and trembling.* These seem to call Christians to live in a doubtful condition, or in a state of trepidation, alwaies fearing: but their intendment is, not to keep the soul from being settled by faith in Christ, but from being high-flown in any opinion of our selves: or the Spirit speaks thus, not to put us upon doubts of our standing, but to preserve us from falling. For these cautions are so far from opposing assurance, that they strengthen it. *The way not to be afraid is thus to fear: nor are any so sure as they who thus tremble.* They that are working out their salvations with fear and trembling, may know without fear and trembling that they shall be saved: and they that thus fear alwaies, may be assured that they shall be above fear for ever. But say some, the Preacher speaks out against this knowledg, *Eccl. 9. 1.* *No man knoweth love or hatred.* It is true, *not by all that is before him:* we cannot know love and hatred from the works of God without us, but we may know love and hatred by the work of God upon us, or by the workings of God within us. We cannot fetch an evidence that
God

God loves us out of our chests and money-bags, nor can we read an assurance or a conveyance for heaven, in the assurances and conveyances of our lands; but we may fetch this evidence and read this conveyance from, and in the covenant of grace, received by faith, witnessed and sealed to our hearts by the holy Spirit.

Secondly, When was it that *Job* manifested this height of assurance? *I know that I shall be justified.* It was after he had said, *I have ordered my cause.*

Hence Observe,

That true assurance or a knowledge that we shall be justified, arise from a due consideration of the state of our hearts and lives.

I have ordered my cause, and now I know. *Job's* assurance did not grow whilst he slept or was secure, his was not an assurance arising from negligence, but from diligence. Some conclude what they have no premises for: they will conclude for heaven and glory, they make no doubt but they shall be saved, but they have no foundation to build this tower of assurance upon, they can say nothing to warrant or bear up their confidence. It is an easie thing to say, *I know I shall be justified,* but it is a hard thing for a man to say, *I have ordered my cause.* They who say they know they shall be justified before they have ordered their cause, do *but build castles in the air*, whereas this castle should be built upon Christ, he is the foundation. Some are as confident as confidence it self, who yet are as ignorant as ignorance it self: some are as confident as confidence it self, who yet are as prophane as prophaneness it self, as proud as pride it self, as worldly as the world it self: Is this the ordering of our cause? or can they order their cause whose hearts and lives are thus out of order? A true believer is able to shew somewhat for it, why he is so sure: he can shew Christ (as I may so speak) his bracelets and his love-tokens, he can tell Christ of the secret smiles and kisses which he hath given his soul some time or other: he can say, Christ is come to me both by water and blood, he can produce the graces and the actings of his Spirit, and can say, by these I am assured, by these I am grown up to this perswasion, that nothing shall ever separate me from the love of God. If any man say he is sure he shall be justified, let him consider how he came by his assurance: Have you ordered your cause, and viewed your state in the glass of the word? hath that presented to you justification, pardon and peace flowing to you in the blood of Christ? If it be so, you may
say

say as Job here, *I know I shall be justified.* But disordered causes can never have assurance of any thing but of wrath and death.

Job having thus made out his first ground, why he would be heard and come to a tryal, proceeds to another, in the 19th verse.

Verse 19. *Who is he that will plead with me? for now if I hold my tongue, I shall give up the ghost.*

Who is he that will plead with me?

Where is the man? The words, as the former, speak the greatness of his spirit. Job durst bid battel and send a challenge to all opposites in the world. He throws down his gauntlet to all comers, Let me see the man that dares undertake me in this dispute?

Serene admodum conscientie, intrepide mentis, & ad certamen spirituale quemque provocantis verba sunt. Nemo est qui me in mea causa convincere potest. Merc.

Who is he that will plead with me?

Job speaks not proudly or vainly, confiding in his own strength or wit, in his nimble tongue or quick invention; he speaks thus, trusting in the power of Christ, and as being assured of such an interest and estate in him as all the opposition in the world should never be able to overthrow.

Job speaks like another Goliath, who (1 Sam. 18. 8, 9.) stood and cried to the Armies of Israel, and said unto them, *why are you come out to set your battel in array? Choose you a man for you, and let him come down to me, if he be able to fight with me and to kill me, then will we be your servants, but if I prevail against him and kill him, then shall ye be our servants and serve us.* In such a manner (but with no such spirit) Job speaks here, where's the man? choose out whom you will to plead and to dispute with me. Thus Job challenged like Goliath, but he fought like David (vers. 45.) *In the name of the Lord of hosts.*

Hence Observe,

He that is sincere fears not to come to tryal.

The righteous is bold as a lion. He is so far from declining tryal, that he invites it; where is the man that will plead with me? But I will not stay upon this, having been led to it lately by a former passage.

Secondly, Observe,

A soul that is sincere and well bottomed upon the grace of God in Christ, is unconquerable.

Job, knowing he should be justified, calls out, *Who is he that will*

will plead with me? As the Apoſtle ſends a challenge in the behalf of believers (*Rom. 8. 33.*) *Who ſhall condemn? Who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of Gods elect?* let me ſee the man or devil who dares. So believers are able to ſend challenges themſelves. Who is it that will plead with us? but are there none will do it? will none accept their challenge? yea, many may be found to plead with them, but none can overcome them. This text in *Job*, and the point grounded upon it, is of the ſame interpretation with that (*Rom. 8. 31.*) *If God be with us, who can be againſt us? Who can be againſt us?* many are againſt thoſe with whom God is, yea, many will be againſt them becauſe God is with them. *They are moſt oppoſed by men whom God owneth moſt.* But who can be againſt us, to overthrow and conquer us? we ſhall ſtand againſt all oppoſition if God be with us. So here, Who will plead with me? *Job* had thoſe that would plead with him, he wanted not undertakers, there was *Eliphaz*, *Bildad*, and *Zophar*; theſe pleaded with him, but theſe did not overcome him. God gives ſentence for *Job*, chap. 42. 7. *Ye have not ſpoken of me the thing that is right, as my ſervant Job hath.* The Prophet brings in Jeſus Chriſt in ſuch a triumph of ſpirit over all poſſible enemies or oppoſers (*Iſa. 50. 7, 8.*) Where as he had ſhewed Chriſt profeſſing that all his power to fulfill the active part of his Mediatorſhip was derived to him from his father (verſ. 4.) *The Lord hath given to me the tongue of the Learned, &c.* So there he ſhews that all the ſtrength and courage with which he was armed to ſuffer or contend in the paſſive part of his Mediatorſhip, was alſo derived to him from his Father, and maintained in him by a continual ſupply of his aſſiſtance. *The Lord God will help me, therefore ſhall I not be confounded, therefore have I ſet my face as a flint, and I know that I ſhall not be aſhamed: he is near that juſtifieth me, who will contend with me? Let us ſtand together (as plaintiff and defendant uſe to do in a law ſuite before the Judge) who is mine adverſary? (or maſter of my cauſe, or owner of my judgement, that entreth his action againſt me) let him come near to me. Behold the Lord God will help me, who is he that will condemn me? Lo they all ſhall wax old as a garment, the moth ſhall eat them.* Theſe words are a comment upon *Job*, and fully explain his meaning: both give us the ſtrength of this Obſervation.

That the Lord being near to a ſoul and ſtanding on his ſide, he can never be prevailed againſt.

The Apostle *Paul* applies that of the Prophet (which originally belongs to Christ) to the comfort of every Believer (*Rom.* 8. 33, 34.) *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods elect? It is God that justifieth: Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again; who is even at the right hand of God.* Here are the holy challenges of faith; faith is ready for all comers. If the law come to plead with us, faith tells it that Christ hath fulfilled the law for us. If sin come to oppose us, faith tells it, *Christ in the similitude of sinful flesh hath condemned sin in the flesh.* If death come and look the soul in the face, faith answers, *Christ hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel:* yea, faith can, not only answer, but scorn death, *O death, where is thy sting?* If the devil come, faith tells him he is but a conquered enemy, and that *Christ hath* (long since) *spoiled principalities and powers, and made a shew of them openly; that Christ came to destroy* (and hath destroyed in us) *the works of the devil.* Thus faith repels the charge of the law, of sin, of hell, and of the devil; yea, if *God himself* frown upon the soul, and his wrath seem to burn as hot as fire against us, faith can tell *God himself* that Christ hath paid our debt, and given a ransom to God for us, and therefore knows that he will not require it of us again, because *he is just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.* If none of these, if neither law, nor sin, nor death, nor devil, nor God himself (considering how he hath been pleased to condescend to poor sinners, and engage himself to Christ on our behalf) can plead down the believing soul, then nothing can. Nor did *Job* boast beyond his line, when he said, *Who will plead with me?*

Lastly, These words, *Who will plead with me?* hold forth not only *Jobs* courage that he durst, in this case, speak with any living, but also the necessity which pressed him to speak, which was such, that if he did not speak he could not live, as is clear in the last clause of this verse.

For now if I hold my tongue I shall give up the ghost.

Nunc enim si
lebo & expira-
bo.

Mr. Broughton renders, *If now I speak not I should starve.*

The Original may be literally rendered thus, *For now I shall be silent and give up the ghost.* And so the meaning is, as if *Job* were halting his undertakers to this quarrel, wishing them to make speed and come to plead with him, that he might try out this

this buſineſs by dint of argument, becauſe he ſaw death ready to put him to ſilence; *I ſhall die*, and then it will be too late to argue or ſpeak with me, therefore while I live, and I perceive I ſhall not live long, let us try it out, and ſee what you have to ſay againſt me.

Secondly, Theſe words, *If I hold my tongue I ſhall give up the ghoſt*, may note two things. Firſt, That Job was filled with abundance of matter, which was exceeding burthenſome to keep within his breaſt, therefore he muſt needs vent, and let it out. As if he had ſaid, I have ſo much to ſpeak, that it will even kill me if I ſhould conceal it. *Elihu* was in the ſame caſe (*Job* 32. 17.) *I alſo (ſaith he) will ſhew mine opinion; for I am full of matter, the ſpirit within me conſtraineth me: Behold my belly is as wine which hath no vent, it is ready to burſt like new bottles, I will ſpeak that I may be refreshed, I will open my lips and answer.* *Elihu* was conſtrained to open his mind, it would be an eaſe to him to ſpeak. So ſaith Job, *Now if I hold my tongue I ſhall give up the ghoſt*. Or ſecondly, It may note, that Job was much afflicted and exceedingly troubled in his ſpirit at what his friends had ſpoken to him, and charged upon him. And ſo it is, as if he had ſaid, you have ſo tormented me with your reasonings, that if I have not liberty to juſtifie mine own innocency, my heart will break: it were better for me to die then to live ſtained with ſuch imputations, and I know not how to live unleſs I may wipe them off.

Hence Obſerve,

Firſt, *It is a pain not to ſpeak when we are much engaged to ſpeak.*

Thus the Prophet complains (*Jerem.* 20. 9.) *I was weary with forbearing, and I could not ſtay.* As ſome are wearied with ſpeaking, ſo ſome are wearied becauſe they do not ſpeak: they are tired with holding their tongues, as much as ſome are with uſing them. Words kept in are as great a burthen to ſome, as words ſpoken out are to others. When a man is under ſuch a preſſure he finds no reſt till he hath delivered himſelf. When *Joſeph's* brethren came to him, he hid his affections a great while, but as ſoon as he ſaw his brother *Benjamin* he could not refrain, he muſt go into a private place to weep, and ſpend his paſſion, elſe it would have broke out before them all. 'Tis ſo with us when we have much *to ſay to God in prayer*, the heart hath a load

upon it, and cannot be quiet, it is ready to break and give up the ghost untill we have broken or opened our minds to God.

From the ſecond ſence Obſerve,

That a man can eaſier die, then ſuffer blots to lie upon his integrity.

Our reputation ſhould be nearer to us than our lives, therefore ſaith Job, *if I keep ſilence I ſhall give up the ghost*, I cannot bear this. He was not ſo ſenſible of any of his ſufferings as of this. And as it is an eaſe, ſo it is a duty to repair our own credit, and to take off what we find unjuſtly charged upon us: eſpecially when it reflects upon Religion, as it did in Job's caſe. His friends ſuſpected him of hypocriſie, *Is this thy fear, thy confidence, and the uprightness of thy waies?* Theſe jealousies ſtirred up the ſpirit of Job to call for his adverſaries, and provoke them to appear and plead it out with him. I have from other paſſages toucht this point before, and ſhall therefore add no more here.

Job Chap. 13. Verſ. 20, 21, 22, 23.

Onely do not two things unto me, then will I not hide my ſelf from thee.

Withdraw thine hand far from me, and let not thy dread make me afraid.

Then call thou, and I will answer; or let me ſpeak, and answer thou me.

How many are mine iniquities and ſins? make me to know my tranſgreſſion and my ſin.

IN the three former verſes, Job prefac'd to his friends, and beſpoke their attention; being ſo well aſſured of his cauſe, that he ſat down under the comfort of this concluſion, *I know that I ſhall be juſtified*. Here, in the three firſt verſes of this context Job beſpeaks God himſelf, and ſeems to indent with him upon ſome conditions before he would ſpeak further or proceed in this diſpute.

Verſe 20. *Onely do not two things unto me, then will I not hide my ſelf from thee.*

As if he had ſaid, I am willing to argue, but it muſt be upon theſe pre-cautions.

Some underſtand theſe words, *Onely do not two things unto me*: as if Job had deſired God not to do two things unto him at once, that is, not to afflict him and confer with him, not to ſmite him and diſpute with him together; it is too much to be at two ſuch works, or rather to be doing and ſuffering at one time: therefore do not two things to me, any one of theſe is exerciſe enough for one man at once.

Cautionem videtur a Deo petere ante diſputationis congreſſum. Pined. Duo, ut ſcilicet mecum litiges, & ſimul me affligas & terres.

What the two things he would not have done unto him were, are ſet down in the next verſe, Firſt, *Withdraw thine hand far from me.* &c. Secondly, *Let not thy dread,* &c. Then call thou, &c.

In that Job deſires God would not do theſe two things unto him, Obſerve,

Firſt, *That all ſufferings are not equal, there is a gradual difference among ſufferings as well as ſpecifical.*

As all ſins, ſo all ſufferings are not equal. Some ſins are more grievous and burthenſome to God than others are (Jer. 44. 4.) *I did ſend unto you all my ſervants the Prophets, ſaying, O do not this abominable thing which I hate.*

This abominable thing. There were many other abominable things which the Lord hated, and which he would not have that people do; but their idolatrous worſhip, their burning incenſe to ſtrange gods, was a ſpecial abomination, *O do not this abominable thing which I hate.* Now, as ſome ſins are more grievous unto God than others, and therefore he deſires earneſtly, that we would not burthen him with them: ſo the Lord laies ſome afflictions upon his people which are more grievous to them than any other could be, and therefore they cry out, *O do not this unto us*: This is ſad.

Hence Note again,

That we are apt to think we can bear any affliction better then that which we fear or feel.

O do not theſe two things unto me, were it any thing elſe, I might undergo it, but I am not able to endure theſe. Some ſpeak thus of any affliction; and he that hath pain in any part of his body, is apt to judge, were this pain ſomewhere elſe, I could bear

bear it better, we are very prone to dispute the dispensations of God, and to think that he might place his chastnings (if he must chastise us) some where else, as much to his own glory, and not so much to our sorrow. *Only do not two things unto me.*

What then?

Then will I not hide my self from thee.

The Hebrew is, *Then will I not hide my self from thy face.* But suppose the Lord would not do those two things for Job, could he hide himself from his face? David saith (*Psal. 139. 4.*) *Whither shall I go from thy presence?* It should seem Job had some whither to go out of the presence of God: *Elihu*, in the 34th of this book, ver. 22. tells us, *There is no darkness nor shadow of death where the workers of iniquity can hide themselves.* How is it then that Job saith he would not hide himself, when as indeed he could not, upon what terms soever God should deal with him?

I answer, When Job saith, *I will not hide my self*, he intends not this, that he could hide himself, but that (if God would not do those two things to him) he should have no cause to hide himself. Hiding proceedeth from a double cause. First, from fear, (*Isa. 2. 19.*) *They shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his Majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth.* Here is hiding for fear. So (*1 Kin. 22. 25.*) the Prophet *Micaiah* having received such course usage from King *Ahab*, tells him to his face; *Behold thou shalt see in that day when thou shalt go into an inner chamber to hide thy self.* Secondly, Hiding proceeds from shame; a man that is ashamed dares not shew his head. That hiding of our first parents was the effect of both these (*Gen. 3. 10.*) In their innocency they were naked and were not ashamed: but after they had sinned they ran among the thickets to hide themselves, being both ashamed and afraid: (*vers. 10.*) *I heard thy voice in the garden and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid my self.*

*Et si nihil mihi
consciens sum, me
tamen absconde-
rem & latebras
quaererem nisi
benevolentia
tua ostensione
rebolarer.*

Fear and shame made him hide himself when once he had sinned. When Job resolves, *then I will not hide my self from thee*, his meaning is, I will not be afraid to appear before thee, nor ashamed to speak unto thee, so he explains himself at the 22^d verse, *Then call thou and I will answer, or let me speak and answer thou me.* that is, I would come forth boldly, and stand with confidence at thy Tribunal. I shall give you a note from this, when I have shewed

shewed the matter of *Jobs* deprecation, *Do not two things unto me, what two things?*

Verse 21. *Withdraw thine hand far from me, and let not thy dread terrifie me, or, let not thy dread make me afraid.*

These are the two things which he earnestly deprecates, And for the removal of both these he prayed as earnestly once before almost in the same words, (*chap. 9. ver. 34, 35.*) *Let him take his rod away from me, and let not his fear terrifie me, then would I speak and not fear him, but it is not so with.* Having opened these two verses there at large, I shall refer the Reader thither: yet because (though the matter be the same) the expressions vary, I shall a little insist upon them.

Withdraw thine hand far from me.

That's his first condition. *By the hand of God*, he means either the afflictions that were upon him, and so it is as much as this, *mitigate my sufferings, abate my pains, release me from my sorrows.* The word which he useth, *Chap. 9. 34.* for the rod of God, is the same in effect which he useth here for the hand of God. Only with this difference, this properly signifies the palms of the hand, *Withdraw thy palms from me*: To strike with the palm of the hand is to strike like a father; a blow with the palm of the hand may have more smart with it, but it hath not so much force and wrath with it as a blow with the fist or hand closed. Yet I conceive *Jobs* intent is the same in both, and though he received strokes of all sorts, some with the palm, others with the fist, some greater, some less, yet all were with the hand of a father: nevertheless, *Job* desires God would withdraw his hand, though he knew it was a fathers hand, because while the smart and pain of that was so vehement upon him, he could not speak nor manage his cause before him freely, *Withdraw thine hand away from me.*

Further, There was another thing, which this request of *Job* may bear an illusion to, *Remove thine hand away from me.* It was a custome among the Ancients to lay the hand upon the head of an offender, as a token of his condemnation. And that's the reason why the hand was laid upon the head of the sacrifice, when all the sins of the people were confest over it; shewing that the sacrifice was (as it were) condemned to die, typifying the death of Christ, who was condemned for us, God having

הרחיק
longe fac a me.
כח habetur hic
non י quod
cap. 9. 34. vir-
gam, hic palmam
i. e. plagam sig-
nificat. Merc.

laid

laid upon him the iniquities of us all. Now, saith Job, *Remove thine hand away from me*: thou seemest to act towards me as if thou wert angry, or didst intend to pronounce a sentence of condemnation against me; O do not deal thus with me; how shall I treat with thee, whilst thou seemest to have such hard thoughts of me? Therefore *Withdraw thine hand away from me*.

But, what was it that lay upon Job as the hand of God? I shewed before, that it was his affliction, which though in it self it be no argument that God condemns, yet in the opinion of some men it is; and Job's friends did therefore think God condemned him, because they saw he afflicted him. So then, the removing of those afflictions, in reference to which his friends pronounced him condemned by God, would be as the withdrawing of the hand from the head of an offender, a sign of his acquitting and absolution.

Hence Note,

First, *Afflictions are grievous to the sensitive part of the best and holiest men.*

Even a Job prayeth, *Withdraw thine hand away from me*. There is no affliction for the present that is joyous but grievous; and as it is grievous to natural men, so it is grievous to the natural part of spiritual men. It is nothing else but grievous unto carnal men, they find no comfort, no sweet at all in it: the Saints do, their inward man hath joy and refreshing in their sorrows, but their outward man feels smart, therefore, *Remove thine hand away from me*.

Secondly, Observe,

While afflictions are sharp unto us, it is hard to compose the spirit to think of, or speak aright to God.

This discovers their folly who put off the great businesses about which they are to treat with God to a sick bed. Job saith to God, take away thine hand and then I will speak: these say I will speak to God when his hand is upon us; we will look to the health of our souls when our bodies are sick: But how rare is it to find a sick body and a quiet mind together! Job could not argue with God about his innocency while he was greatly afflicted, how then shall others about the settling of their eternal peace and the pardon of their sins? *We are more prone to impatience than to repentance in the day of our distress.* Thirdly, Observe,

It is lawful to pray for the removing of afflictions.

With-

Withdraw thine hand away from me, was a good petition; we may make such petitions unlawful if we put our wils as a law to God, and do not leave all to the will of God. *We may pray for the thing, but we must submit the circumstances of it, the time of it, the manner of it, to the wisdom of God.* While we desire him to withdraw his hand, we should get our hearts willing to bear his hand; that's a gracious frame of heart indeed. As it is the worst frame of heart to pray for the pardon and removing of our sins, while we find a willingness, much more a resolvedness in our hearts to continue in them; so it is the best frame of heart to pray for the removing of afflictions whilest we find a willingness to continue under them, if God shall so dispense and please. See more of this, Chap. 9. 34. *Withdraw thine hand away from me.*

And let not thy dread make me afraid.

Thy dread] Giants are called *Emims*, from this word (because they are terrible to beholders.) And so are Idols, because though they are indeed but meer scar-crows and bug-bears, yet they are terrible to the ignorant and unbelieving, as was further shewed, Chap. 9. 34. Terror unde Emim Gigantes.

What was this *dread*? It may either be that terrour which accompanied his afflictions, there being as it were some sparklings of Gods anger mixed with them. When God gives us the bitterest cup of affliction to drink, if he do but drop in a little of his love we take it down as a pleasant draught; but if he drop the least of his anger into the cup of affliction, this is dreadful. Hence *David prayeth* (*Psal. 6. 1.*) *O Lord, rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure.* He doth not pray absolutely, let me not be rebuked, but *rebuke me not in thine anger*, let me see thy love in my rebukes. He knew God did love him, but he could not see it: God rebuked him, and he perceived nothing but anger; God chastened him, and he saw nothing but displeasure, yea, and hot displeasure; this made him cry out, *O Lord, rebuke me not, &c.*

Secondly, This *dread* may be taken for the majesticall presence of God; though there be no lettings out of his anger or displeasure, yet the very appearance of God to poor dust and ashes hath a dread in it, such a dread, as not only strikes the most eloquent man dumb, but the stoutest dead: The majesty of God is

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infinitely

infinitely above the creature; therefore he saith to *Moses*, *No man can see my face and live*; there is so much dread in the face of God, that man cannot behold it. We may conceive the Lord at this time letting out much of himself to *Job*, his terrour was upon him. God shews himself to ~~no~~ man two waies.

First, In some external visible form, so he often appeared to the Fathers in the old Testament. 'Tis the opinion of some that the Lord shewed his dreadfulness to *Job* by an outward apparition.

Secondly, God shews himself to the mind of man: and as the appearances of God to sense are very dreadful; so are those which he makes to faith. They who have no outward visions of God are yet often terrified at the mental apprehensions of his glory and Majesty. Faith makes things present, and doth evidence them to the soul as fully as sense can. God cannot be seen, yet faith can give us a sight of God, a sight of his power, and of his wrath, as well as of his goodness and mercy: and untill the Lord withdraw that, and put other evidences before the eye of the soul, there's no peace. That's the reason why many wicked men have been brought to utter despair, and dy'd in horror of conscience; they apprehend the wrath of God revealed against them, and their consciences are affected with it; there is a kind of faith upon their consciences, such as the devils have, who *believe and tremble*, and so do wicked men: they are full of trembling and astonishment at those representations of the greatness, power, and majesty of God, which their faith makes to them. Now, as it is with them, so it may be with true Believers much more: they have deep and terrible apprehensions of God; and according to the degree of this faith, is the degree of terrour which falls upon them (*Psal. 90. 11.*) *Who knoweth the power of thine anger? even according to thy fear so is thy wrath.* Though the displeasure of God be as himself, alwaies alike, yet to those whose hearts are tender the displeasure of God is more grievous. Hard hearts have no fear in them, and to them the displeasure of God is nothing, they dread it not, they will venture upon the pikes, and rush upon the swords point. *Job* was a tender-hearted man, he feared God, therefore these appearances of God to his faith did exceedingly affect and trouble him: So he speaks, Chap. 31. 23. *For destruction from God was a terrour to me, and by reason of his highness I could not endure.*

Hence

Hence Observe,

First, *The holy God is in himself very dreadful to the most holy and upright among the children of men.*

Job had said, Chap. 10. 7. *Lord thou knowest that I am not wicked*: and at the 18th verse of this chapter, *I know that I shall be justified*. What a faith was here! Yet now he confesseth, *Thy terror makes me afraid*. Where was there a holier man then *Habakkuk*? yet read the third chapter of that prophesie, and you shall find how he shook and trembled, how his lips did quiver, and rottenness entred into his bones, and all at the apprehensions he had of the majesty and greatness of God. That holy Prophet *Isaiah*, how was he affected when God appeared to him! he crieth out, *Wo is me, for I am undone, for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts*. When the Lord appeared to publish that holy Law, how did the people tremble! O (say they) *let Moses speak to us, but do not thou speak, lest we die*, Exod. 19.

Secondly, Note,

That God doth sometimes appear to his people in majesty only, and not in mercy.

He letteth out his glory and his greatness, but conceals his goodness, his loving kindness and compassion. They can see a holy God, a just God, a high God, a glorious God, but they do not see a merciful God. God acts not as a natural, but as a voluntary agent, and therefore he can suspend or dispense himself as he pleaseth. The sun hath light, but the sun (being a natural agent) cannot suspend its light; it alwaies shews its brightness and beauty, except some cloud interpose, or the moon eclipse it: but the Lord who is light, and all light, doth not alwaies manifest himself in light; he puts clouds and darkness round about him; he hideth his face and will not be seen. Sometimes he appears all mercy, and at other times all justice; sometimes all goodness, and at other times all wrath; sometimes he lets out nothing but love, and at other times nothing but displeasure: Now, as he varies his dispensations to us, so we are apt to vary in our apprehensions of him: and as we cannot see God at all untill he manifest himself, so we see him no otherwise than he pleaseth to manifest himself: Hence the same soul sees him to day all mercy, and the next day, possibly, the next hour all justice: Now, his goodness refresheth, and anon his dread terrifies.

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Thirdly,

Thirdly, Observe,

That as ſome afflictions are more grievous than others, ſo thoſe are moſt grievous to a godly man which carry any appearance of the diſpleaſure of God.

O let not thy dread terrifie me. All ſufferings cannot terrifie where God ſhews his love; and any will, where he ſhews his dread. If a man were in hell aſſured of the love of God, he could rejoyce; and if he were in heaven under thoughts of his wrath, he could not but tremble. His love is better than heaven, and his wrath is worſe than hell.

Laſtly, Note, As a deduction from the whole,

That if a godly man may be thus terrified with the majeſty of God, how terrible will the wrath of God be to the wicked!

Job was not afraid of the wrath of God againſt his perſon, for he had ſaid immediately before, *I know I ſhall be juſtified.* If the majeſtical dread of God ſwallow up the beſt, the holieſt men, how will the dreadful majeſty of God ſwallow up wicked men! how will he conſume them, who is to his own as a conſuming fire! We may argue here, as the Apoſtle Peter doth in language neer to this (1 Pet. 4. 18.) *If the righteous ſcarcely be ſaved, where ſhall the ungodly and the ſinner appear?*

Job having thus deprecated the terrour of the Lord, *Withdraw thine hand far from me, and let not thy dread make me afraid:* reſolves (upon the ſuppoſition of this grant) what to do;

Verſe 22. *Then call thou, and I will answer, or let me ſpeak, and answer thou me.*

This is as much, and in effect no more, then he ſaid before, Chap. 9. 3. *Then would I ſpeak and not fear him:* yet here he a little amplifies what he ſaid there; for though Job doth often ſpeak the ſame thing for ſubſtance, yet his expreſſions are full of uſeful variety, new flowers of rhetoric, and new actings of his affections ſhew themſelves. There it was, *Then I will ſpeak and not fear him:* here, *Let him call and I will answer, or let me ſpeak and answer thou me.*

Job, in theſe words, gives God his choice to take which part he pleaſed. As in law ſuits, one ſuſtains the part of the plaintiff, and another ſuſtains the part of the defendant: or, as in diſputes, one ſuſtains the perſon of an opponent, and the other the perſon of a reſpondent. Unto theſe Job alludes, as if he had ſaid, *I am entering*

*Attor vocat
reum, reus re-
ſpondet, Ita
conſtat judi-
cium cum vo-
catione intelli-
gitur actio, &
cum reſponſione
deſenſio. Coc.*

entring upon a diſpute, and commencing my ſuit in heaven before the tribunal of Jehovah: As for me, I know mine own integrity ſo well, that I care not which part I take, I will be opponent, or I will be reſpondent; I will be plaintiff, or I will be defendant, and therefore Lord I refer it wholly unto thee; take which part thou pleaſeſt, I'll take up what thou leaveſt, and do what thou appointeſt. Then call thou, and I will answer.

This offer argues only abundance of courage and holy confidence, yet ſome have adjudged it ſcandalous and full of arrogancy: as if Job had taken too much upon him, and had ſpoken more boldly to God then became him: as if he thought himſelf match enough for God at any weapon, or were ready to deal with him upon any terms. *Eliphaz* is ſuppoſed to aim at this paſſage (*cha. nem, interim ſui* 15.4. *yea, thou caſteſt off fear*) yet moſt excuſe him, conceiving that all this did flow from an holy familiarity which Job had with God: and that becauſe he had a gracious friendlineſs in his heart towards God, he would therefore ſpeak to God as to a friend. Or it imports only that Job was very ſure of his cauſe, and therefore, as when a man would ſhew the confidence he hath to foil his adverſary in combat, he ſaith, chooſe what place you will, take what weapon you will, bring out two ſwords, take you one, and I will take the other, I deſire not to ſurpriſe you, or deal with you upon diſadvantages. So Job being aſſured of a good end, was content to ſtand to the determination of God himſelf, in what way he ſhould proceed to tryal.

Then call thou, and I will answer.

Then] This particle *Then*, implies that he could not do it till then, and that then he could: as if he had ſaid, *I ſhall be in no caſe, either to answer or to oppoſe, unleſs theſe two conditions be granted, but then I ſhall.*

Call thou.

The Lord calleth us to do our duty; And he calleth us to answer, and give account how we have done our duty, or what we have done. He calleth daily to the firſt in the preaching of the word. And he will call us all to the latter in that great day by the ſounding of the Archangels Trumpet, (*Pſa. 50.4*) *He ſhall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people:* and verſ. 1. *He hath called the earth,* that is, the people of the

the earth, he will call them all before his throne; *Job* offered himself to a personal day of judgement before that general day of judgement. *Call thou*, is (*verbum forenſe*) a law-term, call me to the bar, or call me before thy judgement-seat.

And I will answer.

The word which we translate *I will answer*, ſignifies often in Scripture, *to teſtifie or give witneſs*; (*Exo. 20. 16.*) *Thou ſhalt not bear falſe witneſs*, the Hebrew is, *Thou ſhalt not answer falſe witneſs*, that is, when thou art required by a Judge to ſpeak in any caſe, thou ſhalt not answer beſides the truth. When *Jacob* had put his part of the cattel on the one ſide, and *Laban* on the other, he ſaith, *ſo ſhall my righteouſneſs answer for me in time to come* (*Gen. 30. 33.*) it ſhall teſtifie or bear witneſs for me. The word is uſed in that ſence (*Iſa. 59. 12.*) *Our ſins teſtifie againſt us*, the Hebrew is, *Our ſins answer againſt us*, which imports that our actions whether good or bad ſhall be called out to ſpeak what we have been and are. And then, good actions will give a good teſtimony, and evil actions will give an ill teſtimony; (*Hof. 5. 5.*) *The pride of Iſrael doth teſtifie to his face*; or *doth answer to his face*. thus here, *Let him call, and I will answer*: I will give in evidence and teſtimony according to the truth of my heart and life. I will not bear falſe witneſs, though it be in my own cauſe.

Or let me ſpeak, and answer thou me.

שׁוּב *Verbum*
respondendi in
hac ſecunda
parte eſt ab alia
radice & lenius
accipi debet.
Pined.

There's the other part. *Let me ſpeak*, I will be plaintiff, or opponent, and let the Lord answer or return; for the word which we render to *answer*, in this latter clauſe is of a different root in the Hebrew from that in the former, and carries in it more reſpect. It intends not any ſummons or citation of God to answer, but is an humble ſupplication, beſeeching him to return what his wiſdom ſhould think fit in answer.

Hence Obſerve,

That acquaintance with free grace gives us mighty confidence towards God.

Take away thy dread and then I am ready for a hearing. I acknowledge my weakneſs is ſuch that I cannot bear thy majeſty; and I know my own uprightneſs is ſuch, that I am aſſured of thy mercy. When the Lord had called his people to repentance, (*Iſa. 1. 16.*) *Waſh you, make you clean, put away the evil of your*

your doings, then he invites them to a free conference, *Come, let us reason together*. He speaks familiarly to them, I will argue it out with you, against all your unbelief: *come, let us reason together*. Now, as God speaks familiarly to man, when he hath put his sins away: so when the Lord hath put his dread away, man speaks familiarly to God, *Come Lord, let us reason together*, now let me speak, and answer thou me; The place where God communed with his ancient people the Jews, was the *Propitiatory or Mercy-seat*. Exod. 25. 22. and the place where God communeth now with his people is called the *Throne of grace* (*Heb. 4. 16.*) *Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need*. We can have no boldness but at a throne of grace; when grace in our own hearts opposing sin meets with that grace which is in the heart of God for the pardon of sin, we are carried, as upon Eagles wings, beyond the regions of fear. *Job* lived long before Christ came in the flesh, yet Christ was come into his heart; and when he desired God to remove his dread, he moved to be looked upon and heard in a Mediatour.

Job having thus prepared his way begins to plead.

Verse 23. *How many are mine iniquities and my sins? make me to know my transgression and my sin.*

His way of arguing is much like that of the 7th and 10th chapters, and his general scope is the same, at once to maintain his own former integrity, and to aggravate his present misery. That's the sum of his discourses, quæries, and expostulations, to the end of the fourteenth Chapter.

How many are mine iniquities?

He seems to take the hint of this first enquiry from *Zophars* wish, chap. 11. vers. 5. *O that God would speak, and open his lips against thee: and that he would shew thee the secrets of wisdom, that they are doubled to that which is; Know therefore that God exacteth of thee less than thine iniquity deserveth.* *Job* answers, you desired that God would speak, you doubted not, but if he did, he would make it appear my sins were double to mine afflictions: With all mine heart (saith he) this is it I long for, I desire that God would speak, and that he would speak out what my sins are. *How many*

many are mine iniquities and my sins? make me to know my transgression and my sin. As if he had said, *I am willing to hear, and know the worst of my self.*

Some conceive that *Job* having made that motion, *let him speak, and I will answer, &c.* stood waiting a while to see what God would do: But receiving no answer, he thus breaks out; *How many are mine iniquities?*

*Adeone flagiti-
osus ego, ut ne
dignus habear
cui improbitate
exprobes? Salte
igitur scelera
mea ostende mi-
hi.*

And these put a very harsh construction upon this Interrogation, as if *Job* had said, *What? am I so wicked and sinful, that I am not worthy unto whom thou shouldest shew my wickedness and my sin? if I am so vile, let it appear how vile I am, and shew me those sins which have rendred me (it seems) not only unworthy of acceptance, but of an answer.* I like not this gloss, neither doth it bear the image of a gracious spirit, such as *Jobs* alwaies was, though it was sometimes a little muddy and tumultuous.

Rather thus, *Job* having a purpose to defend his cause, asks at once, from the grief of his heart, and from the clearness of his conscience, *How many are mine iniquities?* as if he had said, *I am suspected of great crimes, and I am in the eye of my friends as a person condemned already, but I would those crimes were brought forth, and surely they ought, before I am either censured or condemned: therefore Lord, How many are mine iniquities and my sins? make me to know my transgression and my sin.*

So the words carry a strong desire, which this afflicted soul had discovered more then once before, to see the bottom of his condition, and to find out the reason why God did thus afflict him: and if it were for sin (about which he had no fear upon his conscience) O that God would but shew him his sin! His sin (under that notion) was a secret to him, but he was willing to know it. There are two questions which would be resolved before I proceed further to the opening of this. *How many are mine iniquities?*

First, Seeing *Job*, at the 9th chap. ver. 22. laid down this conclusion, *He slayeth the wicked and the righteous*, and upon that bottom grounded all his answers, that the dispensations of God are alike in outward things to good and bad; Hence the question riseth, why he labours so much to clear himself of sin, as if his afflictions must needs argue him wicked, whereas he before had argued, that the Lord doth as much afflict the righteous as the wicked.

I answer, *Job* speaks thus, as vindicating his person, not as doubting his state. He did not question whether God was his friend, because he was afflicted, but he desired to remove the suspicions of his friends. *Zophar* (*chap. 11. ver. 14.*) gave *Job* occasion to call for this discovery, while he counselled him, *If iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away, and let not wickedness dwell in thy Tabernacles.* His friends put these jealous suppositions, these ifs and and's often upon him, *if iniquity be in thine hand, &c.* The counsel was good, but their jealousy was not. *Job* saw what hung upon their spirits, and therefore begs of God to unsecret his sins and lay open his transgressions. As if he had said, *Lord, my friends are unsatisfied with all the professions and protestations which I have made of my innocency: they suppose that I keep my sin close, and roll it like a sweet morsel under my tongue; they would rake into my life, and see the bottom of my heart, Lord, let them see all, shew them what I am, and let me know what I have done. If it be as these men say, let it appear to thy glory and to my shame. How many are mine iniquities and my sins? make me to know my transgression and my sin.*

Secondly, It is questioned why *Job* makes request that God would shew him what and how many his sins were, was he curious to know their Arithmetical number? Did he think God had over-reckoned him, or that himself could know their reckoning? or did he think his sins were so few, or so small that they could not hurt him? One sin is enough to justify God in our condemnation, we need not ask for a great many. The best of Saints, even they who have lived in no sin, and comparatively have committed but few sins, yet have desired the Lord to cover their sins, and pronounced him blessed, *whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered* (*Psal. 32. 1.*) as the Saints are not forward to proclaim their good works, so neither is it pleasant to them to have their sins proclaimed: why then is *Job* so busie about this point of knowledge?

I answer, *Job* did not ask this question either out of curiosity to know the number of his sins, or as if God had put more to his account than he had committed. He did not desire this, as if he thought his sins were either so few or so small that they could do him no hurt; nor doth he speak by way of extenuation, as if they were not many. He knew his sins were many and great, yea, that if he had but one, and that a little one, he could not boast before God.

S f f

But

*Nihil aliud est
quã se sibi bene
conscium.*

But First, He speaks thus, because he knew his sins were neither so many as his friends had reckoned them, nor so great as they had aggravated them, nor so black as they had painted them.

Secondly, When he desires to be shewed his sin, it is a proof that he was not guilty of any beloved sin. He speaks as *Paul*, 1 Cor. 4 4. *I know nothing by my self.* Lord, if any filth lie unseen, make me know it, *his heart did not condemn him*, and therefore he had confidence towards God. 1 Job. 3. 21. as if he had said, Lord, My accusers have no proof, they do but guess that I am wicked, my own heart is not so much as my accuser at all; Lord, thou knowest exactly what I am, shew me, shew all, How many are my sins?

Thirdly, He desired to know his sins, first, that he might be-mourn and repent for his yet unknown sins; secondly, that he might turn from them, and return to God more fully; thirdly, That he might be more watchful against them.

Lastly, He was bold to ask this question, because he knew God would deal with him as a Father by a covenant of grace through Christ, not as a Judge by a covenant of works in himself: and therefore he was not afraid to know his sins, and to have them all set in order before him; He was assured God would not condemn him, and he did not contend to justify himself before God, he only waited till God would justify him against the contendings and uncharitable surmisings of men. These, or such as these were the grounds upon which Job makes his address to God, and puts both this question and request: *How many are mine iniquities and my sins? make me to know my transgression and my sin.*

How many.

מנא ad utriusque pertinet, ad multitudinem scilicet & magnitudinem. *Quantas habeo iniquitates?* Vulg. The word refers both to quantity and quality: The Vulgar reads it, *How great sins have I?* or *how great are the sins which I have?* we read it quantitatively for the number, *how many are my sins?* How great, or how many? Make me to know both their number and their nature.

Hence Observe,

First, *God only can give us the number and nature of our sins.*

No man can tell how many his sins are, they are more then the

the hairs upon our head, they are as the ſands upon the ſea-ſhore innumerable. The kinds or ſorts of ſin, yea, the greater acts of ſin may be numbred by man, but he only that numbers the ſtars can number all our ſins. We commit many ſins of ignorance, and we are ignorant of ſome of our ſins of knowledge; we commit known ſins which we do not know that we have committed.

And as God only knows the number, ſo the greatness and the aggravations of our ſins. Who can underſtand his errors? (Pſa. 19. 12.) He means practical, not doctrinal errors. As theſe errors or wandrings are beyond our numbring, ſo alſo beyond our underſtanding. As there is a height and a depth in the love of God which paſſeth our knowledge: ſo there is an height and a depth of wickedneſs in our hearts which paſſeth our knowledge. The Lord only can ſhew us how ſinful we are, as he only can ſhew us how gracious himſelf is.

Further, The multiplication of terms in this paſſage is conſiderable, *How many are mine iniquities and my ſins? make me to know my tranſgreſſion and my ſin.* Here are three Original words, by which Job doth expreſs the ſame thing. 1. iniquity. 2. tranſgreſſion. 3. ſin. The Latines give us four, and they labour much to find out a material diſtinction in this verbal diſtinction; or to ſhew how iniquity, tranſgreſſion and ſin, as alſo how ſin in the firſt clauſe, and ſin in the ſecond differ.

The firſt word which we tranſlate *iniquity*, ſignifies a perverſeneſs and crookedneſs of ſpirit: or thoſe ſins which have a peculiar crookedneſs and perverſeneſs in them. The ſecond ſignifies any the leaſt aberration from the way or rule of holineſs in our actings, though our hearts ſtand right: every ſtep beſide the line is ſin. The word in the ſecond clauſe, which we tranſlate *tranſgreſſion*, ſignifies *rebellion* and *obſtinacy* of ſpirit, the riſings of our thoughts againſt God.

The Latines make out the diſtinction thus, By *iniquities*, they underſtand thoſe evils which are committed againſt our neighbour. By *ſins*, thoſe which a man commits againſt himſelf. By *tranſgreſſions*, thoſe which are immediately againſt God: And by ſin in the fourth place, *Omiſſions*; as if he had ſaid, Lord, ſhew me mine iniquities, any evil I have committed againſt others: ſhew me my ſins, thoſe which I have committed againſt my ſelf; ſhew me my tranſgreſſions, the rebellions of my life againſt thy Majeſty; And ſhew me my ſins, all my neglects to perform, or negligent performances

מִנּוֹחַ
Per errorem ad-
miſſa עוֹנוֹת
ſunt proprie
perverſitates;
עָוָן
est, defectionem
& rebellionem
ſignificans. Mer.

Latini utuntur
quatuor distin-
ctis verbis &
curioſius inter
hec diſcrimen
conſtituere ni-
tuntur. 1. iniqui-
tas in proximū.
2. peccata in ſe
3. ſcelera in Deū
4. delicta omiſſi-
ones: Lyran.
Aquin. paulo
ofaliter.

of holy duties : spread all before my face. This hath a truth in it : yet the holy Ghost doth not observe such a distinctness in these words, but useth much variety and liberty in their application.

Sometimes sin, which goes lowest in ordinary signification, is an aggravation : (*Hos. 12. 8.*) *In all my labours they shall find none iniquity in me, that were sin*, as if sin here were more then iniquity, or great iniquity. Sometimes iniquity is put as an aggravation upon sin (*Psal. 32. 5.*) *Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin* : that is, the sinfulness of my sin, or those considerations which have rendred my sin out of measure sinful. Now, seeing there is such a promiscuous use of these words in Scripture, we cannot clearly establish or build upon such a difference.

*Est conacervatio
quædam artifi-
cio plena: Nam
sicut ejusdem
vocis repetitio,
ita etiam pluri-
marum eandem
rem significanti-
um acervatio
vim solet addere
orationi. San.*

Therefore passing by those critical nicities, I shall take the words as *Synonyma's*, signifying one and the same thing; yet being thus joyned, they signifie more than any one singly can. For as the repeating of the same words heightens the sence, so also doth the heaping up of divers words which have the same sence. So that this Rhetorical accervation intimates *Jobs* earnest desire that all his sins, by what name or title soever distinguished might be produced and made known unto him. *Let my iniquities, my transgressions, my sins*, call them what you will, let them all be presented to my face. When God proclaims his pardoning mercy, he heaps up these words in his own title, calling himself *the Lord, the Lord gracious, &c. pardoning iniquity, transgression and sin*: Lest any breach of the Law might be thought unpardonable, all the words which imply a breach are used in the proclamation of pardon. And while *Job* would here shew both his repentance and his innocency, that he was far from hiding any darling sin in his bosome, he begs the discovery of whatsoever bare the name, or had the nature of sin in his heart or life.

Hence Observe,

First, *That the better any man is, the more willing he is to know the worst of himself.*

He who is light in the Lord, is willing to see his dark part as well as his light. Some are very desirous others should know the good they have done, but they cannot abide to be shewed the evil which themselves have done. The Pharisee (*Luk. 18.*) publisheth to all, how he paid tithes and gave alms, how he fasted and prayd,

prayd, &c. but he spake not a word, either of confessing his known sins, or begging a sight of what he did not know. *Solomon* perceived that this spirit of self-flattery possessed many in his time (*Prov.* 20. 6.) *Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness, but a faithful man who can find? Hypocrites labour much to shew others their goodness: The sincere labour more to see their own vile-ness.* A godly man finds delight only in the knowledge of his graces, but he finds profit in the knowledge of his corruptions. We are pleased only with the sight of friends, or of wife and children in our houses, but if a thief be got in, we thank him that shews us who and where he is. There are two things which argue a gracious frame of spirit: First, when we desire to know how frail we are; secondly, when we desire to know how sinfull we are. A natural man loves not to take notice either of the infirmities of his body, or of the presumptions of his soul: And though some wicked men will say, from a spirit of impudence, they care not who knows their iniquities, transgressions and sins, yet no wicked man ever did or can say, from a spirit of repentance, Lord, make me to know mine iniquities, my transgressions and my sins. A carnal heart is more willing that others should know his sins, then he is (under this notion of knowledge) to know them himself; he knows them in the history or matter of fact, with a kind of delight, it sometime pleases him to remember the evil which he hath done: but he cannot abide to know them in their nature, it never pleases him to repent of the evil which he hath done.

Secondly, Observe,

Whilest Christ is known to us, we need not be afraid to have our sins known to us.

To know sin, and not to know Christ is sad. One sin seen without a sight of Christ swallows up the soul: but a sight of Christ swallows up all our sins. None can be truly willing that God should shew them their sins, but they to whom God hath shewed a Saviour. *Job* had said, *He shall be my salvation*, before he said, *shew me my transgression.* When we have seen heaps upon heaps of mercy in God, we cannot despair (though we ought to grieve) when we see heaps upon heaps of sin in our selves. *Heaps of mercy cast down or cover heaps of sin.* All our mountains of sin become mole-hills, yea, plains before this *Zerubbabel*.

Again, It is remarkable, that *Job* having asked the question,

How

How many are mine iniquities? follows it preſently with this petition, *Make me to know my transgreſſion and my ſin*: As if he had ſaid, I may ſee my ſins how many they are, or that they are very many, and yet not know what any one of them is, without thy ſpecial teaching. Hence Obſerve,

Our ſins may be told us, or we may have the tale of our ſins, and yet not know our ſins.

It is harder to know the nature, than the number, what, then how many our ſins are. Every man (who knows any thing of the ſtate of man) knows he is a ſinner, but few know their ſins. Chriſt is preached to all, yet Chriſt is not known to all: There is much in this, *Make me to know*. To know ſin, is to be ſenſible of the evil of ſin, as to know Chriſt is to have a feeling of Chriſt, and to taſte how ſweet the Lord Chriſt is. We may hear of our ſins all our daies, and yet not know our ſins: It is poſſible for a man to write down catalogues of his ſins, and to keep a record of them every day, and yet not to know them, not only not ſo far as to mourn for them after a godly ſort, but not ſo far as to be affected with them after a moral ſort, or ſo far as an ingenuous man might be. It is one thing to know our transgreſſions, another thing to write our transgreſſions or to ſpeak of them. For, as *ſome have whole books written full of Sermon-notes by them, who have not one line of a Sermon written in their hearts, or upon their waies; ſo a man may have whole books written full of ſin-notes, and yet not one ſin making impreſſion upon his heart.* There are but few who know what they know.

There is a threefold knowledge of ſin.

Fiſt, In the kind of it, that this or that is ſinful, this knowledge of ſin comes not from our ſelves. There are many actings which we do not know to be ſinnings, till God makes us know them. Some things wherein we thought we did God good ſervice, we may find our ſelves transgreſſors in them.

Secondly, There is a knowledge of ſin in the nature of it, that it is a transgreſſion of the law, and a departure from God: That it is a filthy and a polluted thing, a baſe and diſhonourable thing; that it is nothing that is good, and all that's evil; that it is ſo evil that we cannot make it worſe then it is, nor call it by any name ſo bad as its own, *Sinful ſin*.

Thirdly, There is a knowledge of ſin in the effects and iſſues of it: That as it is filthy, ſo it defiles; that as it is a pollution, ſo it pollutes

pollutes every thing that toucheth it: That, as it is base and dishonourable in it self, so it doth embase and dishonour every soul that commits it, much more those that love it: That it is big with and brings forth death, that it is fruited with damnation, that it is armed with all the curses written in the Book of God against sinners: That the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against it, and shall be poured out upon it for ever, unless we have part in the blood of Christ, which was poured out to wash and save us from it. We never know sin thus till God makes us know it. Sin is as a fire to consume, as a serpent to sting and poyson us, yet sinful man esteems it but as a fire or as a serpent painted upon a wall, or set upon a sign-post, which though they have the colour, yet they have not the heat of fire, nor the poyson of a serpent. *Grace only gives us the true sense of our own sin:* And he who hath received the largest measures of the grace of God, had need to be instant in prayer with the God of grace, to make him know his transgression and his sin.

JOB Chap. 13. Vers. 24, 25.

wherefore hidest thou thy face, and holdest me for thine enemy?
wilt thou break a leaf driven to and fro? and wilt thou pursue the dry stubble?

WE need not labour much for the connection of these words, which are indeed a continued description of the sorrows of a troubled spirit. Some joyn them with the request made in the former verse, thus, *How many are mine iniquities and my sins? make me to know my transgression and my sin.* Wherefore hidest thou thy face? As if he had said, Forasmuch as I proposing that to thy Majesty, to discover the worst and darkest part of me, and yet thou dost not bring forth any accusation, or lay any crime to my charge, seeing by thy silence thou seemest to acquit me of being guilty of any such transgression as my friends have suspected me of: Wherefore is it that thou hidest thy face, and holdest me for thine enemy? If indeed thou couldest produce against me any studied wickedness, or arraign me at thy bar for an hypocrite, then I should see

Cum à me rogatus (O supreme iudex) ut si quæ sunt apud te recondita mea scelera proferre velis, taces omnino, sane videris tuo isto silentio testari, nihil tale in me reperisse, cur igitur abscondis faciem & mecum tanquam cum inimico agis?

Aquin. reason

reason enough, why thou, who art of purer eyes then to behold any unclean thing, shouldst hide thy face from me in such uncleanness, & were I such an one, I might see reason enough why thou shouldest count me as an enemy, or never own me as a friend. But forasmuch as that not only appeareth not, but indeed is not, I now further desire to understand what is the cause why thou hidest thy face from me, and why thou holdest me as thine enemy.

Verse 24. *Wherefore hidest thou thy face, and holdest me for thine enemy?*

The words are not so much a question, as an expostulation, which is a very vehement opening of the heart to let out the grief that lieth there: Yet *Job* keeps within the bounds of duty and holy modesty: he did not invade the prerogative of God whilest he thus asked an account of him. We must here take in a double supposition, that we may clear *Job*. First, That he knew God had a reason why he hid his face from him. Secondly, We must suppose, that in case the Lord should still hide the cause from him why he did hide his face from him, yet *Job* was resolved to sit down and honour God even in that darkness about his own condition: for without these suppositions, to put questions, much more to put expostulations upon God, is unbecoming the state of the creature, much more of a Believer. We must say God hath just cause for whatsoever he doth, and he doth not wrong us, if he refuse to shew us the cause, though we request him to shew it us.

Wherefore hidest thou thy face?

Here are two things to be opened.

First, What is meant by *the face of God*.

Secondly, What hiding his face doth mean.

This phrase [*The face of God*] must be understood by that common figure, an *Anthropopathy*; God is often spoken of in Scripture after the manner of men; sometimes inward passions, sometimes (as here) outward parts are ascribed to him.

The face of God is put First, For the essential glory of God.

Quare Divinitatem tuam subducis? Targ. (Exod. 33. 13.) When *Moses* desired to see the glory of God, the Lord telleth him, vers. 20. *Thou canst not see my face, for there is no man can see my face and live. Thou canst not see my face, that is, my essential glory, thou maiest see my declarative or my manifestative glory, the glory of my attributes, as they are expressed in that procla-*

proclamation of his great Name. The face of God, as taken for his eſſential glory, is alwaies hid, it is an object too pure and ſpiritual for the eye, and too high for the underſtanding of a creature.

Secondly, the face of God ſignifies the general preſence of God: and ſo when God hides his face, he denies us the comfortable enjoyment of his preſence.

Thirdly, and more particularly, The face of God ſignifies the anger and wrath of God (*Lev. 20. 6.*) *The ſoul that turneth after ſuch as have familiar ſpirits, and after wizards, to go a whoring after them, I will even ſet my face againſt that ſoul, and will cut him off from among his people.* And in the *Pſalms* often the Lord is ſaid to ſet his face, that is, to manifeſt his diſpleaſure againſt wicked men. The face of God, ſignifies alſo the favour of God, the good will of God. ſo in this place, and *Pſ. 18. 19. 1 Sam. 13. 12. Numb. 6. 25. Dan. 9. 17.* both theſe, the anger and the favour of God are called the face of God, becauſe the anger and the favour of men appear in their faces. Man can form his face into the ſignification of either of theſe, into an angry look, or into a pleaſing look: we may ſee wrath, or we may ſee love printed upon the countenance. Hence the favour and the anger of God are expreſſed by *the face of God.* *Job* complaineth that the favour of God, the light of his countenance was hidden from him.

Hideſt.

The hiding of the face of God may be conſidered either as it is, or as we apprehend it to be. His face is never hid, but to our apprehenſions. In his diſpenſations, there are the hidings, and there are the diſcoverings of his face, there are the ſhuttings, and there are the openings of his love. Further, the hiding of the face implies two things.

Fiſt Diſpleaſure, A man turneth away his face from thoſe with whom he is diſpleaſed.

Secondly, Diſdain, We turn from thoſe we ſleight: and to turn the back upon a man is a real ſleighting. Where we will not look, we do not love. As the Prophet ſaid to a great King, (*2 Kin. 3. 14.*) *Were it not that I regard the preſence of Jehoſaphat the King of Judah, I would not look toward thee nor ſee thee.* So here, *Wherefore hideſt thou thy face?* is, why art thou ſo angry with me? why doſt thou ſleight me, as if I were not worth a look or a caſt

Iratorum more qui eos quibus ſuſceniſent aſpicere dedignantur, Merc.

Faciem avertere indignantiſt eſt & ſupplacium inferentiſt, ſicut faciem convertere benevolentis & beneficiſt eſt, Pine.

of thine eye: A man in misery usually saith, *Pray look upon me.*

*Antiqua erat
consuetudo,
quod cum judi-
ces capitis sen-
tentiam latueri
erant interj. Et
velo se contine-
bant absconditi.
Hujus meminit
Basil. Ep. 79.*

Again, This also, (as some interpreters conceive) hath reference to a judiciary proceeding: *Speak thou, and I will answer, or, I will speak, and answer thou me, wherefore hidest thou thy face?* When a Magistrate finds a business foul against a man, he turns away from him. Some of the Antients refer it to a known custome of the Judges in those times, who when they pronounced sentence of condemnation, caused a curtain to be drawn before them, or, hid their faces from the condemned party; for as the covering of a mans face was a token that he was condemned, so they who condemned them covered their own faces; Of which custom see more upon those words, *cap. 9. ver. 24. He covereth the faces of the Judges thereof, &c.* And whether the usages of former times, in judiciary proceedings, give any light to this text or no, yet the general scope and intendment of it is plainly thus, *Wherefore, O Lord, dost thou put thy self into an angry posture against me? why are all the appearances from Heaven to my soul black and lowring? why is it that I see not those former smiles in thy face? why am I not received into the embraces of thy arms? why dost thou act the wrathful Judge, who art indeed a loving Father? As my soul hath delighted in thy forepassed kindnesses, so it desires to know, with all humble submission to thy will, why thou grievest me now with this unkindness, the hiding of thy face? Tell me Lord, tell me, wherefore hidest thou thy face from me?*

Hence Observe,

First, *That holy men even in this life have a sight of the face of God.*

Wherefore hidest thou thy face? It was not usual with God to hide his face, *Job* had seen it, else he would not have complained because he could not see it. We are not much troubled at the want of that whereof we never had any experience nor enjoyment. We are not at all troubled at the non-enjoyment of that of whose being, or whether there be such a thing or no, we are altogether ignorant. *Job* saw God did not deal with him as he was wont, nor do to him after the manner of a friend. God had been familiar with him, and given him frequent visits, this made him so sensible of his present shieness and estrangements. *Chapt. 10. ver. 12. Thy visitation hath preserved my spirit.* When friends visit, they see one anothers faces. It is said of the two Kings

Kings (2 *Kin.* 14. 8.) that the one ſent to the other, ſaying, *Come, let us look one another in the face*; that is, Let us have an interview. *The ſoul of a Believer hath interviews with God, God and he do often look one another in the face.* Whereſoever the Saints are (except in caſes of deſertion) the place may be called, as *Jacob* called that where he wraſtled with God, (*Gen.* 32. 30.) *Peniel*, that is, *the face of God*: yet not in that ſenſe fully in which *Jacob* calls it ſo; He called it the *face of God*, becauſe he had ſeen God *face to face*. We call it ſo only (ordinarily) becauſe we ſee his face; It is one thing to ſee *the face of God*, and another thing to ſee *God face to face*. The former is the common priviledge of Saints in this life, the later is very rarely given the Saints here, or it is the priviledge of but ſome Saints, and thoſe rare ones, to have it here.

There is a twofold ſight or viſion of God.

Fiſt, A viſion of grace; Secondly, a viſion of glory. Glory is nothing elſe, but the viſion of God; (*1 Joh.* 3. 1.) *We ſhall ſee him as he is*. Both theſe ſights of God are expreſſed by one phraſe of ſpeech, in the Hebrew of the old Teſtament, and in the Greek of the new, and we tranſlate both by ſeeing God *face to face*. So *Jacob* profeſſed in the place now cited, that he had ſeen God; and the Apoſtle promiſeth that we ſhall ſee him ſo, (*1 Cor.* 13. 12.) where he alſo compares the ſight of God here to ſeeing in a glaſs darkly, and calls the ſight of him in Heaven, a ſeeing of God *face to face*. Now the reaſon why ſome of the Saints (as *Jacob* and *Moses*) are ſaid to ſee *God face to face* in this life, which the Apoſtle appropriates to the next, is this, as I conceive, becauſe thoſe ſights of God which *Jacob* and *Moses* had were immediate, God in an extraordinary manner coming down to wraſtle with *Jacob*, and calling up *Moses* in an extraordinary manner to ſpeak with him in the mount; Theſe diſpenſations being (*præluſia gloria*) the foreactings of a glorified eſtate, are ſet forth by that act which is peculiar and proper unto the ſtate of glory, *The ſeeing of God face to face*. But, as for the uſual maniſeſtations of God to believers in this life, they are only the ſeeings of his face.

So then we muſt diſtinguiſh of the viſions of God in this life. Some are extraordinary, ſuch was that of *Jacob* and *Moses*, ſuch was that of the Prophet (*Iſa.* 6. 5.) and *Job* (chap. 42. 5.) By all theſe God was ſeen (in this ſenſe) *face to face*. There

are also ordinary manifestations of God, in which only the face of God is seen; And those may be referred to three heads.

First, We see his face in the glass of the Word, there we have a vision of God: hence the preaching of the word is called *vision*, (Prov. 29.18.) *Where there is no vision the people perish.*

Secondly, *We see the face of God in the glass of his works.* What God is, appears in what God doth. God needs not sub-

scribe his name to his works (as men do) to shew that he is the Author of them, for *his works are his name*, and in what work soever his hand hath been, his face is seen. Especially in those three great works, first, in the work of creation (Rom. 1. 20.) *The invisible things of him from the creation of the World, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made.*

Secondly, In the works of Providence. And this even in the common works of providence, our daily support and protection, the constant course of seasons and times, of nights and daies, Ps. 19. 1. *The Heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handywork, day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge*, that is, the providences and turnings of every day, declare the glory of God, and shew his handy-work; but chiefly in wonderful providences, in his great deliverances and miraculous operations for his people, is God seen. Thirdly, *In the work of Redemption, in which the face of God is more seen than in both the former, even his manifold wisdom; Ephesians 3. 10.*

Thirdly, *We see the face of God in the Ordinances of his worship, in them we have the most visible visions of God in this life.* For this sight holy David was athirst, Psal. 63. 2. *O God thou art my God, &c. My soul thirsteth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is, to see thy power and thy glory so as I have seen thee in the Sanctuary.* *The sight of God in the Sanctuary, is through the Ordinances and worship of the Sanctuary.* God is seen in his works; but he is seen more in his word; in that as in a glass with open face we behold the glory of the Lord, till we are changed into the same image (2 Cor. 3. 18.) *The sight of God is a transforming light, we cannot see what he is, and be what we are.* The beauty of God shines in his Ordinances, and that beauty beheld doth not only reflect upon, but assimilate the beholder. Hence David again (Ps. 27. 4.) makes it the chiefest and the choicest, the one and the only thing of all his desires, *One thing have I desired.*

fired of the Lord, that will I ſeek after, that I may dwell in the houſe of the Lord all the daies of my life; what to do? To behold the beauty of the Lord. Where doth beauty ſit? Beauty ſits in the face, and therefore to behold the beauty of the Lord, is to behold the face of the Lord. Theſe are the ordinary viſions of God in this life, or the ſeeing of his face: and when the Lord is pleaſed to give any of his ſpecial favourites extraordinary and immediate manifeſtations of himſelf (which as he did to ſome Saints before the coming of Chriſt, ſo he can renew it (when he pleaſeth, and ſees it fitting) to believers now) when, I ſay, God gives immediate manifeſtations of himſelf, *they may be ſaid to ſee God face to face, becauſe ſuch manifeſtations are the firſt-fruits of glory, or glympſes of Heaven before we come to Heaven, where we ſhall as fully, and as clearly as a finite nature can take in an infinite, ſee God face to face.*

Now, as unbelievers ſhall never ſee God *face to face* in glory: ſo they know not what it means to ſee his face in waies of grace. And therefore they entertain it with a kind of ſcorn, when it is reported that any man hath ſeen the face of God; this is a ſtrange language to the men of the world, who live without God in the world. *They who live without God in the world, live without God in the Church:* and we are as Barbarians to them, they underſtand not what we ſay, *when we ſay we have ſeen God in prayer,* or at the word, in private duties, or in publick aſſemblies. In theſe, believers ſee the face of God, they who do not, do nothing in any of theſe. Our buſineſs in ſuch duties is to ſee God: we come not to ſee one another, or to ſee the walls and ornaments of the place we meet in, we come not (as the Diſciples ſpake, wondring at the fabrick of the Temple) *to ſee what manner of ſtones and buildings are there; but to ſee what a holy and gracious God is there;* and when the worſhippers in ſpirit miſs this ſight, though they know their labour is not loſt, yet the comfort they expected is not gained, and therefore they mourn, yea, humbly complain, *Wherefore hideſt thou thy face?*

Secondly, Obſerve,

That God doth ſometimes withdraw himſelf, and hide his face from his choiceſt ſervants.

It is the ſole priviledge of the Saints to ſee the face of God, but they live not alwaies in the enjoyment of that priviledge: (Iſa. 8. 17. I will wait upon the Lord that hideth his face from the houſe:

house of Jacob, and I will look for him. The Saints are now the *house of Jacob*, the eye, yea the heart of God is ever upon this house, yet he sometimes hideth his face from it. Then the Lord hideth his face, when he doth not enlighten as formerly, when he doth not enliven as formerly, when he doth not assist in doing as formerly, when he doth not support in suffering as formerly, when there is a withdrawing of these, or in any of these, then God is said to hide his face from the house of Jacob; *David* often bemoans himself under these hidings. And the Prophet puts the case in general, that such as fear the Lord, and obey the voice of his Servants, may yet walk in darkness & see no light (*Isa* 50. 10.) we never want light in our spirits, till the face of God is hid from us, as we never want light in our eyes till the Sun is hidden from us: but why doth God hide his face from his choicest servants? *Job* a choice servant of his asks the reason, wherefore hidest thou thy face far from me? I shall (upon that occasion, and the clearing of this Scripture) answer it in some particulars.

First, The Lord hides his face sometimes, because he will hide his face. What if God should have answered *Job* when he enquired, *Wherefore hidest thou thy face?* It is my pleasure. God may do it by prerogative, and neither ask us leave, nor give us the reason why. *As he will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardneth* (*Rom.* 9. 18.) so he may say, I shew my face to whom I will, and from whom I will I hide it.

But, Secondly, He hideth his face at one time, because he intendeth to shew it more clearly at another. When he means shortly to give the soul a full sight of himself, he gives it at present no sight of himself: when he is about to pour out abundance of love into a bosome, he quite withdraws the sense of his love.

Thirdly, Undervaluings of former manifestations are often chastened with after hidings.

Fourthly, God denies his presence, that we may prize his presence, and pray more earnestly for it.

Fifthly, When we value the face of the World too much, God hides his face. When we are desirous to make a fair shew in the flesh, God will not shew himself to our spirits. Our dalliance with the creature causeth God to look off from us, or to look strangely upon us. The heart of a godly man may get a haunt to some vanity here below, and then God restrains vision from above

bove. He shews us the wandrings & out-lyings of our affections, by the withdrawings and vailings of his own. **We cannot love God till he shews us his face**, and after we have seen it vve cannot but love him; yet they who have seen him, and love him, may for a time be overtaken with the love of the World, and then God will not be seen. Every opening of our selves to the world is a hiding of our selves from God. **When we hide our faces from God, no wonder if God hide his face from us.**

Sixthly, When we hide our faces from the waies, or from the people of God, God will hide his face from us. Some who have had communion with God, and have seen his face, may (under a temptation, or upon a gust of carnal fear) if not withdraw from, yet scarce own the people or the waies of God; yea possibly they may set their faces against some of the waies of God. When it is so with them, God will surely hide his face from them. Apostates draw back totally from profession, when they perceive they cannot bring forward their own profit or other private interelts by their profession, and of such the Lord hath said, *My soul shall have no pleasure in them*, (*Heb. 10. 38.*) **True Believers may draw back partially, or in part, and when they do so, God will make them know that while they are in such a base temper his soul hath no pleasure in them, and therefore hides his face from them.**

As these or the like are causes in us vwhy God hides his face, so he hath gracious designs upon us, vvhich he effects by hiding his face. Chiefly these twvo,

First, To try us. *There is no greater trial of grace than the withdrawing of comfort*; and in that state vvhich we shall have a conjunction of all comfort, vve shall never be put to the trial of any grace; yea, the graces vvhich act in trials shall have no existence there. Faith, and hope, and patience, have no place in Heaven, because they have no vwork in Heaven: And they have no vwork there, because God vwill never hide his face, and Satan shall never shevv his face there. For betvveen the appearing of Satans face, and the hiding of Gods face, lieth the work of these graces. (*Isa. 8. 17.*) *I will wait upon God who hideth his face*: there's the trial of patience, to keep close to God, vvhich God seemeth to depart from us.

Secondly, God hides his face that we might be in love vwith that state vvhich his face shall never be hid. 'Tis best of all to be dissolved

dissolved, and to be with Christ, because then we and our joyes shall never be divided. That joy which depends upon changeable things must needs be changeable. The joy of Heaven is a dependent joy, yet because God on whom it depends will never change a look towards us, therefore our joy shall be unchangeable. If the Sun did alwaies continue the same aspect upon the Moon which it doth at the full, the Moon (though hers be a dependent and a borrowed light) would ever continue at the full, and know no change. God will not vary his aspect towards the Saints in Heaven, for one moment to all eternity; and therefore the joy of Saints in Heaven will be for ever at the full. There is a double difference between the manifestation of God here upon earth, and in Heaven. First, A difference in the degree; the manifestations in Heaven are clearer; here *in a glass*, there *face to face*, as the Apostle speaks. Secondly, The manifestations of God to the Saints in Heaven are without intermission, there shall not come one cloud between the face of God and our souls for ever. Hence, as the holiness, so the joy of the Saints in Heaven shall be the same for ever. Now God hides his face, and puts us to this question, *Wherefore hidest thou thy face?* that we may long for that estate where this question shall never be put, *Wherefore hidest thou thy face?*

Thirdly, Observe,

That it is a great affliction to the soul when the face of God is hid.

Wherefore hidest thou thy face? As if he had said, Lord, I could suffer any affliction, yea, all afflictions better than this one. *Job* was not a type of Christ (as I have touch'd before) but as in many things, so in this, his spirit and his condition were very parallel, or like to Christ. When Christ was upon the Cross, he cried out, and put this question, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Such was *Jobs* cry, *Why hidest thou thy face from me?* As Christ upon the Cross, so *Job* upon the dunghill had a body full of pains, but he passeth by these, and only complains of the sufferings of his soul in the hidings of his Fathers face. Here was the pinch, *Why hidest thou thy face from me?* The Lord threatens, *Deut. 32. 20. I will hide my face from them, I will see what their end shall be:* Certainly no good end if God hide his face. He speaks in reference to temporal or outward things, *I will hide my face from them*, that is, I will withdraw my protecting presence, my wonted

would influence and aſſiſtance, or as he tels them (*Jer. 18. 17.*)
I will ſhew them the back and not the face in the day of their calamity,
 when I have done this, then *I will ſee what their end ſhall be.*
 Though God be not ſeen, yet he can ſee; having hid himſelf, and
 left a ſinful people to ſhift for themſelves, he then (as it were)
 watches, like *Moses* ſitter when he was put into his boat of bul-
 ruſhes (*Exod. 2. 4.*) to ſee what will become of them. God
 knows the end from the beginning, and looks quite through all
 cauſes into their iſſues, yet thus he ſpeaks after the manner of
 men, who cannot ſee an hour before them, *I will ſee what their*
end ſhall be. God ſees they muſt needs come to a miſerable end,
 whoſe waies he will not vouchſafe to ſee. Much more is this
 true in regard of our inward and ſpiritual eſtate; if God hide
 his face, he ſeeth what the end will be, even anguiſh and ſorrow,
 trouble and vexation of ſpirit. What can that ſoul ſee but viſi-
 ons of darkneſs, which hath no viſion of God, who alone is light.
 After the people had ſaid (*Hos. 6. 2.*) *Let us return unto the*
Lord, for he hath torn, and he will heal us, he adds, After two daies
 he will revive us, in the third day he will raiſe us up, and we ſhall
 live in his ſight. In his ſight, which ſome interpret, when God
 brings us into his ſight, or into a ſight of him, we ſhall live, that is,
 our lives will be ſweet unto us, we ſhall recover when God ap-
 pears to us, and gives us evidence that we are accepted with him.
 A ſight of the face of God is the happineſs and life of man. As
 no man can ſee the eſſential face of God and live, ſo no man can
 live comfortably, unleſs he ſee the providential face of God.
 It is obſerved, that the heathens exceedingly deſired a ſight of
 their gods, and that they might ſee them, they invented images,
 and ſet up ſtatues to repreſent the gods; that ſo they might ſee
 whom they worſhipped, and at once behold and adore their
 dunghill-deities. They knew no way of ſeeing their gods but by
 their ſenſe, and therefore they made ſenſible gods. They would
 rather have gods with eyes that could not ſee, then not ſee their
 gods with their eyes. Yea, I find a learned Chriſtian among
 the ancients giving this as one reaſon why Chriſt took our nature
 upon him, and ſo became God maniſeſt in the fleſh, that, God
 who in himſelf is altogether inviſible, might be viſible in his Son,
 God is more viſible in Chriſt, then he is in all creatures: The A-
 poſtle calleth him the brightneſs of his glory, and the expreſs image
 of his perſon (*Heb. 1. 3.*) Jeſus Chriſt is the brightneſs, the

*Gentiles ob hoc
 ſimulacra finxe-
 runt ut oculis
 cernerem quod
 colebant.*

*Chryſologus hinc
 argumentatur
 incarnationis
 cauſam, ut ſe
 inviſibilis deus
 faceret viſibilem
 ſatis faceretq, a-
 mari, qui quod
 amat videre
 ſent-cupit.*

U u u

forth-

forth-light, the beams or splendour of his Fathers glory, and the imprinted image of his essence or person (for the words are a metaphor drawn from a lightsome body, which sends forth beams of light, and from a seal that leaves its own impression or image where it is stampd, I say) Christ Jesus is all this, not only in regard of his divine nature, and eternal generation, but also in respect of his incarnation, and sending in the similitude of sinfull flesh. For in Christ manifested in the flesh, the glory and excellency of God the Father shined forth; who as he is in himself altogether invisible, so he is in nothing so visible as in his Son our Lord Jesus Christ; and therefore all the former waies of manifesting God under the Law, have been laid by and disused, since God manifested himself to us by his Son: the excellency of this being so great beyond the former, that to look for them would be but like calling for star-light after the Sun is risen, as the Apostles way of argumentation doth clearly evidence, in the first of the *Hebrews*, ver. 1, 2, 3. But to return to the point (from which I have upon the overture of this notion a little digressed.) It appears by all this, that the manifestation of God to the soul, is our highest both priviledge and comfort, and that the hidings of his face are our greatest both loss and sorrow.

There are four particulars from which I shall briefly evidence this yet further.

First, The need, or rather the absolute necessity we stand in of the presence and favour of God. *It is needfull for us to have the creature, but there is a necessity that we should enjoy God. God is enough for us without any creature, but all creatures are nothing to us without God;* God and all that he hath made, is not more than God without any thing that he hath made.

Secondly, All our profits come in at the door of divine favour and munificence. *And having God we have all; He that hath the fountain hath the stream, he that hath the Mine hath the gold and silver. He that hath the Sun hath the light; Whil't we enjoy communion with God, we enjoy the fountain, the Mine, the Sun of all enjoyments.* We say *there is no fishing to the sea*, because the sea hath the vastest capacity, there's fish enough in the sea to fill all our nets, and to lade all our vessels: we may say infinitely more truly, there is no enjoyment to the enjoyment of God, God hath enough not only to supply all our needs, but to satisfie all our desires. The best of meer creatures is but a particular good.

All

All creatures are not an univerſal good. *The One, the One-moſt God is all good. God will be hereafter, and he can be now, All in all unto us.*

Thirdly, *Nothing is ſo honourable to man as the enjoyment of God.* It is an honour to a common man when he is admitted to the preſence of a great man. If a Prince (who is but man in a great letter) ſpeak kindly to us, and ſhew us any countenance, we think our ſelves honoured not a little: what is it then for the great God of heaven to ſhew us his face, and give us countenance?

Fourthly, *It is joy and delight unſpeakable to enjoy the face of God.* One of the Roman Emperours was of ſo amiable a temper and compoſure that he was called *The Delight of mankind*: *God is indeed the delight of Saints.* The joy of glory is this, *We ſhall ever be with the Lord*; the joy of grace is, *When the Lord is with us*. We may have grace, but we can have no joy, when God hides his face from us; and he that hath once ſeen the face of God, can never give over asking, knocking, praying, begging, till the Lord reſtore unto him the light of his countenance, and the joy of his ſalvation. *Wherefore hideſt thou thy face?*

And holdeſt me for thine enemy.

We may expound this latter claufe by the former: Surely thou holdeſt me for an enemy, *elſe why doſt thou hide thy face from me?*

Holdeſt.

The word ſignifies the eſteem or account which we have either of perſons or of things (*Gen. 31. 15.*) *Are we not counted of him ſtrangers?* ſay the wives of *Jacob*, in reference to their Father *Laban*; he deals with us as if we had not been born in his family, or as if he had no relation to us. So here, *Thou counteſt me, or, thou holdeſt me for thine enemy*, that is, thou carrieſt it as if thou hadſt nothing at all to do with me upon terms of friendship, as if thou hadſt no acquaintance with me, or hadſt never ſeen me before; yea, thou dealeſt with me, not only as with a ſtranger, but as with an enemy; not only as if thou didſt not know me, but as if thou didſt hate me.

By nature we are all enemies to God, (*Rom. 5. 10.*) *Whileſt we were yet enemies Chriſt died for us.* Yea, we are his hearty enemies or enemies with our hearts: we hate God naturally, as we ſhould love him ſpiritually, with all our might, and all our mind.

mind. *We were enemies in our minds, or, by our minds, by reason of wicked works.* (Col. 1. 21.) *Job* was once such an enemy, but he knew he had been reconciled unto God by the death of his Son in the promise, and so was become his friend. *Job* knew he was justified and pardoned, that God was his God in covenant, and therefore it was strange to him to receive the usage of an enemy. Is this thy kindness to thy friend, to number him among thine enemies?

For thine enemy.

ἡγνῆται δὲ μὲν
ἐπὶ τῷ αὐτῷ
ἐπὶ τῷ

Putas me tibi
contrarium.

Sept.

Ita me percutis

ut soles quos

inimicos judi-

casti. Sic caro

judicat in cruce.

Merc.

An enemy is, first, one whom we hate; secondly, He is one who hath done or attempts to do us wrong; thirdly, an Enemy is one whom we oppose, and seek to destroy. *Job* seems to have this thought, that God had all these thoughts of him. *Thou holdest me for thine enemy*, that is, as one whom thou hatest, as one that had done thee wrong, as one whom thou opposest and wouldest destroy. *Thus the flesh judges even in those who are more than flesh.* The rule of love given by Christ is, *Love your enemies*, if thine enemy hunger, feed him, if he thirst, give him drink: *Job* speaks of himself as of an enemy in a vulgar notion: for as of an enemy dealt with according to the laws of nature or of nations, not according to the law of Christ or of Gospel-grace, yet God did indeed feed and comfort *Job*, though he outwardly dealt with him as an enemy, pulling the bread from his mouth, and stripping him of all his comforts.

Hence Observe,

First, *God acts towards some of his nearest friends as if they were his greatest enemies.*

He may not only hide his face from them, but shew his wrath against them. God wounds his with love, and he wounds those whom he loves. *Whom I love, I correct*; there is wounding in correcting. So he acted toward *Jacob* (Gen. 32:) *he wrestled with him.* Is it the part of a friend when he meets his friend to wrestle with him? When friends meet, they embrace and salute one another, they rejoyce and confer one with another: God wrestled with *Jacob*, and wrestled with him not in sport, but very roughly, he put his thigh out of joynt and made him halt for it. And as God dealt with personal *Jacob*, so he dealt with national *Jacob*, or the people of the Jews, who were his friends above all the nations of the earth, Jer. 30. 10. *Therefore fear not thou, O my servant Jacob,*

Jacob, saith the Lord, neither be dismayed, O Israel, for I will save thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of thy captivity. This was a gracious promise that the Jews should return from *Babylon*. But who sent them into *Babylon*? or was it the part of a friend to send them into *Babylon*? It was God who sent them into *Babylon*, and himself interprets his own action (*vers. 14.*) *I have wounded thee with the wound of an enemy, with the chastisement of a cruel one, for the multitude of thine iniquity, because thy sins were increased.* God, who wrestled with *Jacob* till he lamed him, smites the seed of *Jacob* till he wounded them, and that not with some slight wound, but with the wound of an enemy; that is, with such wounds as an enemy is wounded with: God wounds a beloved people with the wounds of an enemy, even with such a wound as an enemy gives, and with such a wound as an enemy receives. God was not an enemy to *Job*, but God wounded him as if he were an enemy. The wounds of God are the wounds of a father, whose end is to correct, not to kill, he smites us as children, and counteth us children whilest he is smiting us; yet he smites so hard, and wounds so deep, as if wrathful anger moved his arm to smite and wound. Great wounds are the wounds of an enemy; for, as a man is said to hate father and mother, yea, and his own life, when he regards not what they say to withhold him from the duty which he oweth to Christ, in this case (though he truly reverence father and mother) he is said to hate them, because we commonly hate those whose counsels and desires we reject, or they at least think we do so: so, a great wound is called by the Prophet the wound of an enemy, because none but enemies use to give such wounds. There is no outward condition so sad, but God sometimes puts his own into it. As a wicked man can do any thing to God but love him, he praises to God, he hears the Word of God, he gives an outward conformity to the Law of God, but he cannot love God: so God can do any thing against his own people, but hate them: He can impoverish them, weaken them, and wound them, he can correct and chasten them, he can speak curstly to them, and deal courselly with them, but he cannot hate them.

Ab inimico illa dicitur illa plaga quia gravis est, qualem inferre solet inimicus. Sanct.

Secondly, Observe,

A godly man may doubt whether God love him or no.

Where God loves he loves to the end. All his friends are his sons.

A son is not taken for years as a servant is: once a son and ever a son,

ſon; and becauſe every friend of God is a ſon of God, therefore once a friend and ever a friend: yet, they who are for ever the friends of God, are not alwaies perſwaded of the love of God. The relation cannot be loſt, but the ſweetneſs of it may. As many wicked men are high-flown in confidences that they are the friends of God, and that God uſeth them as friends, they are rich, and they are full, they have favour and honour in the world, above thousands of their brethren, upon theſe grounds they boaſt, *ſee how God loveth us*, and yet at that time God hates them and counts them as his enemies. The Jews had an high eſteem of *Moses*, they truſted in *Moses*, yet Chriſt ſaith unto them (*Joh. 5. 45.*) *I will not accuſe you to the Father, there is one will accuſe you, even Moses in whom ye truſt.* So will ſome glory that God is their friend, and they his favourites. But while they think they truſt God, and God helps them, we may ſay, God whom they truſt will accuſe, and not only accuſe, but deſtroy them as profeſſed enemies. Now, as ſome have falſe perſwaſions that God is their friend, ſo others are under falſe ſuſpicions that God is their enemy. An upright heart is not alwaies ſetled in this great truth, that God loves him, yea, he comes almoſt to a ſettlement in this great error, that God hates him. Nothing can ſeparate us from the benefits of the love of God (*Rom. 8. 39.*) but many things may ſeparate us from the feelings of it.

Thirdly, Obſerve,

To be an enemy to God is the worſt of all conditions.

God is the beſt friend, and the worſt enemy; no love like his no wrath like his: *Thoſe mine enemies that would not have me reign over them, bring them forth and ſlay them here before me.* His foes ſhall be his footſtool. And as to be a real enemy to God, is to be in the worſt condition; ſo to apprehend our ſelves enemies to God, or not in the favour of God, is a very ſad condition. I have opened this point further at the 7th Chapter, verſ. 11. Where *Job* complains in language near this, *Why haſt thou ſet me as a mark againſt thee, ſo that I am a burden unto my ſelf?* An enemy is the mark againſt whom we direct all our ſhot, and brandiſh all our weapons. *We are all by nature enemies to God, bleſſed are they who through grace are his reconciled friends.* *Job* having asked the queſtion, why God hid his face, and held him as an enemy, beſeeches him not to contend with him, becauſe he was (if he was) ſo weak and inconfiderable an enemy.

Verſe

Verse 25. *Wilt thou break a leaf driven to and fro? and wilt thou pursue the dry stubble?*

There is a twofold consideration of this verse; First, as it stands in its own bounds. Secondly, As it relates to the words following. I shall here open it in its own compass, and onely explain the meaning of this manner of speaking.

Both parts of the Verse are proverbial, and are nearly allied in sense to that proverbial speech used by the Prophet (*Isa. 42. 3.*) repeated by Christ (*Matth. 13. 20.*) *He will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax.* To break the bruised reed, and to quench the smoking flax, is as much as to break a leaf driven to and fro, and to pursue the dry stubble. So that both these similitudes express such as are weak and unable to resist, or the adding of affliction to those who are already overburdened with affliction. That for the general.

Wilt thou break?

The word which we translate, *to break*, signifies to break terribly, or to beat a thing to powder: to break with power, or to shew much power in breaking. Sanctifie the Lord in your hearts, and let him be your dread. He is to be dreaded who can break all power, and whose power none can break (*Luk. 12. 4.*) Fear him which after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, fear him. The mighty man is expressed by this word, because men of might are able to break opposers. But wilt thou mightily break that which hath no might? What's that?

A leaf driven to and fro?

Wilt thou put out thy power against him that is but weakness? A leaf upon the tree is a weak thing, but a leaf shaken off the tree, driven to and fro upon the ground, is contemptible: Wilt thou break a leaf? and

Wilt thou pursue the dry stubble?

To break a leaf, and to pursue the dry stubble are one thing. And as there he speaks not barely of a leaf, but of a leaf driven to and fro, so here he compares himself, not only to stubble, but to dry stubble. Stubble will consume quickly, but dry stubble is at once flame and ashes. Such a poor thing, such a nothing am I, and

Folium propulsi concutit, secundum vulgare dictum, qui afflicto afflictionem addit. Drus.

עץ Est contere, confringere, aut robore se, & ostendere in aliquo confringendo.

עוצים Potentes dicti qui potentia sua alijs sunt formidabiles. Merc.

Fere eadem sententia, nisi forte stipula aliquid ignobilius & inutilius significat.

and wilt thou strive with me? While he saith, wilt thou do this? he intimates that 'tis not Gods manner to do this.

Hence Observe,

First, God useth not to afflict those that are afflicted, or to act his strength upon those who have no strength.

The day of the Lord (saith the Prophet, Isa. 2. 12.) shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up, and he shall be brought low; upon the Cedars of Lebanon, and upon the Oaks of Bashan, and upon all the mountains, and upon the hills, that are lifted up. God doth not use to deal with the leaves of the Oak and Cedar, but with the body and roots of the Oak and Cedar: his quarrel is not with the stubble which grows upon the hills and mountains, but with the hills and mountains themselves. He loves not to humble the humbled, but the proud, nor to bring down those that are low, but the lofty. 'Tis true the meanest sinner shall not escape his judgment, but he chiefly desires to be doing with the mighty. Usually the Lord gives strength to the weak, he rarely opposeth the weak with his strength. That's the report which the same Prophet makes (Isa. 25. 4.) Thou Lord hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in their distress (thou dost not put out thy strength against the poor and needy in their distress) Thou art a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat (therefore surely thou usest not to storm those that are in the storm, or kindle a fire upon those that are in the heat.) 'Tis the Lords manner to bind up the broken, not to break the broken, to heal the wounded, to comfort the mourners, to raise up them that are cast down; he useth not to smite the wounded, to grieve the mourners, or to cast them lower who are already cast down. 'Tis the way of God to weaken the strong, and to strengthen those that are weak. Will he break a leaf? he will not.

Secondly, Job speaks it as a thing unbecoming, and below the great, the mighty God, to contend with the weak.

Hence Observe,

It is no honour to the strong to overcome the weak.

Is it an honour to the Eagle to catch a fly, or for a Lyon to kill a mouse? Thus David bespeaks Saul (1 Sam. 24. 14.) After whom is the King of Israel come out? after a dead dog, or after a flea? Am I a match for thee? Go rather and lead thy army against the Philistines, engage with thy equals if thou wouldest get honour.

To

Non est conve-
niens ut aliquis
fortissimus
ostenderet suam
potentiam in re
debilissima.
Aquin. —
Itane velis te
fortem præbere
conterendo folio
quod vento va-
patur? Pin.
Contra folium
cui avellendo
satis est tenu-
issimus spiritus,
insurgere iubes
vehementissimū
ventum?

To ſee a ſtrong man fight with a childe, or conquer a woman, is it any honour to the man? The Poet of old ſaid, *Is it a glory to God to lay ſnares for man?* God is ſo much above man, that he cannot honour himſelf in oppoſing man. The ſtrongest men, compared with God, are ſo weak, that when he would get himſelf honour in oppoſing them, he uſually gives them more ſtrength, that ſo his ſtrength may be ſomewhat glorified in overcoming them. God ſets the creature on high, that his highneſs may appear in pulling them down. Strength ſubduing the ſtrong, and wiſdom befooling the wiſe, get a name in the world. Thus he ſaith of Pharaoh, *Even for this ſame cauſe have I raiſed thee up, that I might ſhew my power in thee, and that my Name may be declared in all the world* (Rom. 9. 17.) Job gave us a particular of Gods powerful acts (chap. 12.) and he ſhews all along that God acted his power upon men of greateſt power, *He looſeth the bands of Kings, and girdeth their loins with a girdle; He leadeth Princes away ſpoiled, and overthroweth the mighty:* he had not to do with underlings; Kings, Princes, and Counſellours, the combined ſtrength of whole kingdoms and nations, are no match for God, but theſe carry the faireſt appearances of a match, and therefore he delights to deal with them. He ſuffers Babylon to arrive at a great height, to be founded upon ſeven hills, to be counſelled by ſeven heads, to be defended by ten horns: Now when Babylon ſits upon ſeven hills, and becomes a beaſt having ſeven heads and ten horns, that is, abundance of wiſdom and policy, ſtore of power and outward force, even the civil power of ten kingdoms to back her, here is wiſdom and ſtrength for the wiſe and ſtrong God to glorifie himſelf upon; and therefore when Babylon falls, the Name of God is cried up (Rev. 19. 1.) *After theſe things* (that is, after the tragical downfall of Babylon) *I heard a great voice of much people in heaven ſaying, Alleluia, ſalvation, and honour, and glory, and power unto the Lord our God.* God needs not break a leaf, or purſue the ſtubble, to ſhew his power, for the tallſt and beſt rotted tree is before him but as a leaf, and the hardeſt metals but as the dry ſtubble. The viſion in Daniel tels us (chap. 2. 25.) that not only the clay, but the iron, the braſs, the ſilver and the gold (that is, the mightieſt Monarchs and Monarchies of the earth) were broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the ſummer threshing-floors, and the wind carried them away. And when at any time God

An gloria magna eſt, Inſidias homini ſuppoſuiſſe Deum & Tibul.

breaks those who are (comparatively to other men) but as a leaf driven to and fro, or pursues those who are but as dry stubble; he doth it not to get himself honour in the acting of his breaking and pursuing power, but of his preserving and saving power: for he preserves *his* whom he thus breaks, and saves *his* whom he thus pursues. Yea, the very reason why he breaks them is, that he may preserve them, and he pursues them upon design to save them. I may add further, that God breaks the leaf, not to shew his power, as to shew what power the leaf hath received from him: The strength of a believer is never more seen then when he endures breaking. *God punisheth the wicked to shew his power, but he afflicts the godly to shew their power.* That power, I mean, which he hath given them, not only to do, but to suffer, whether for him or from him. It were indeed no honour for God to try his strength upon us, but it is a great honour for us when God at once gives and tries our strength. To see a leaf whole in the very breaking, and flourish in the withering, to see dry stubble endure the flame (and like the bush in the book of *Exodus*) to burn and not to consume, this gives witness to all the world how strong a weak man is by the power of God, *Being strengthened with all might according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long suffering with joyfulness,* Col. 1. 11. As God never indeed breaks the bruised reed, nor quencheth the smoaking flax, so he would never assay to break the bruised reed, but to shew that it will not break; nor would he assay to quench the smoaking flax, but to shew that it will not quench or go out, *till he send forth judgement unto victory:* as if he had said, the bruised reed shall not break till it be made strong, and the smoaking flax shall not be quenched till it be a perfect flame, that is, it shall never be broken, it shall never be quenched. Judgment brought to victory, is holiness, or the principle of grace within us, triumphing over all temptations without us, and all corruptions within us, by the power of Jesus Christ.

Again, A leaf or dry stubble are the emblems, not only of that sort of men who are accidentally weak, but of all men in regard of their natural weakness. Thus the strongest men are but stubble: And some conceive *Job* speaking here of himself, not only as he was a man in affliction, whom the tempest of Gods wrath had shaken as a leaf, and the heat of troubles had parched into dry stubble, but he speaks of himself as a man: and what he speaks

Aptissima similitudine utitur Jobus ad hominis imbecillitatem notandum. Pin.

ſpeaks of himſelf is applicable to mankind. *Man at his beſt eſtate is altogether vanity*, Pſal. 39. He is compared indeed ſometimes to a flower in the field, which hath ſap and moiſture, greenneſs and verdure in it, yet he is of ſo ſhort a continuance, that even this green flower is but dry ſtubble: He hath a ſpring wherein he buddeth, and a ſummer wherein he is green, but his Autumn and his winter, wherein he faderh, and his fruit falleth off, come ſo faſt upon him, that he may call his whole life a winter, and all his daies the fall of the leaf. A godly man in reference to his ſpiritual eſtate, is like unto a tree, *whoſe leaf ſhall not wither*, Pſal. 1. 3.) but in reference to his temporal eſtate, he is like a withered leaf: So the Prophet complains, *Iſa. 64. 6. We all do fade as a leaf, and our iniquities like the wind have taken us away.*

Laſtly, Note this,

The Lord is moved to pity, when we mind him of our frailty.

The intendment of Job was not to charge God with ſeverity, but to move him to mercy. **Our ſtrongest argument to prevail with God, is to ſhew him our weakneſs: To confeſs our natural weakneſs moves him much; to confeſs our ſpiritual weakneſs, moves him much more.** If a Pharifee come and tell him a long ſtory of his righteouſneſs, the Lord abhors it; but if a poor publican look upon himſelf as unworthy to look up to heaven, this ſtirrs, not only compaſſion, but acceptance; *He went home juſtified rather than the other.* If you would prevail with God, hold forth your ſoars, your ſickneſſes, your diſeaſes, your diſtempers, your nothingneſs; ſay, you are but ſmoaking flax, and bruſed reeds, that you are but leaves driven to and fro, and as the dried ſtubble. There is yet a further ſence to be given of theſe words as they ſtand in connection with the following verſe, to which I paſs.

Dum ſe Iobus folium & ſtipulam appellat, ſibi acceſſum præparat ad divinam miſerecordiam quæ eo ſe facilius inflectit, ubi maiorem eſſe videt miſeriam. Sanct.

Non fuit hæc Iobi mens ut quicquam voluit de Dei gloria detrabere, ſed ut commemorationis tenuitatis ſuæ & ſummæ Dei potentiæ illum ad miſerecordiam fleſſeretur. Merl.

JOB Chap. 13. Vers. 26, 27, 28.

For thou writest bitter things against me, and makest me to possess the iniquities of my youth.

Thou puttest my feet also in the stocks, and lookest narrowly unto all my pathes; thou settest a print upon the heels of my feet.

And he as a rotten thing consumeth, as a garment that is moth-eaten.

AT the 24th verse, Job was sadly inquisitive, *Wherefore hidest thou thy face?* &c. here he makes as sad a narrative. David (Psal. 66. 16.) invites all that fear God, *Come, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul.* Job seems to invite attention from all, while he declares what God had done against his soul, *Thou writest bitter things against me,* &c. The whole relation is carried on in a continued metaphor, alluding to a judiciary proceeding; as if himself were a guilty malefactor, and God the supreme Judge; First, Aggravating his fault, and pronouncing sentence upon him, verse 26. *Thou writest bitter things,* &c. Secondly, Executing the sentence, verse 27. *Thou puttest my feet also in the stocks.* In the close of all, Job declares the effect which that sentence pronounced and executed wrought upon him, (vers. 28.) *He as a rotten thing consumeth, as a garment that is moth-eaten.*

Thou writest bitter things against me.

God hath a double book, and both in a figure. He hath a book of his *resolved decrees*, and a book of his *acted providences*. This later (the book of his providences) is but a transcript or a copy of the former. Those huge Original volumes of love and blessings which God hath laid up in his heart for his own people, those also of wrath and judgement which he hath laid up there against his enemies from all eternity, these volumes (I say) of love or wrath, are in writing out every day, by the hand and pen of providence in the ordering of all those affairs which concern both persons and nations. Job is to be understood of this later book, the book of providence, in which God writ bitter things against him, though those bitter things compared and laid together,

ther, with the comfortable issues in the book of Gods decrees, were indeed, if not sweet and pleasant, yet very wholesome and profitable.

Further, This writing of bitter things is also conceived to be an allusion to Judges, who command the sentence against offenders to be written. That which is written, is not only recorded, but established. *What I have written, I have written*, saith Pilate, as if he had said, I may sometime recall a transient word, but what I have written, and is under my hand, shall stand. And writing hath a firmness in it, especially *laws*, which tell men what they must do, and *judgements* which tell them what they must receive or suffer: So the people of God are said to *execute the judgement that is written* upon the Kings and Princes who oppose the kingdom of Christ (*Psal. 149. 8, 9.*) *To bind their Kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron, to execute upon them the judgement written.* That is, written in the decrees of God, and written by the decrees of men. Thus they spake in the book of Daniel, *Now, O King, establish the decree, and sign the writing that it may not be changed*, Dan. 6. 8. And when the Lord would shew Belshazzar the certainty of his approaching ruine. (*Dan. 5. 24.*) he presented unto him the plaister of the wall of his palace, the fingers of a mans hand, which wrote over against the candlestick, and this writing was written, *Mene, Mene, Tekel, &c.* A bitter thing was written against that Prince in the midst of his delicious banquettings. *Thou art weighed and found too light: Thy kingdom is divided, &c.* And as in all civil nations, the sentence of judgement is written, so among the Grecians, to write was as much as to accuse and impeach: why not also among the Jews? *Jobs* wish seems to imply it (*chap. reo latam sen- 31. 35.*) *O that mine adversary had written a book against me*, that is, a book of accusation, which in the civil law is called a *Libell*, and the act of bringing in an accusation, *Libelling*. It is the way of our law to bring in writings of inditement, or of charge against offenders, as well as to write the sentence or judgement given upon it. Thus (*Fer. 32. 30.*) *Write this man childless* (*saith the Lord*) *a man that shall not prosper in his daies.* As if he had said, the decree is gone out against him, he shall not escape.

Thou writest bitter things. The laws of *Draco* are said to be written in blood: and this decree of God against *Job* was (as he

scribere forense videtur & per- tinct ad firmum & irrevocabile iudicis decretum. Translatio du- eta est a regi- bus sententiam scripto manda- libus. Chrys.

Græci dicunt γεγραμμεναι δίκην, quam iudex sententiam per- scribit & γεγραμμεναι est accusare. Merc.

he conceived) written with gall and worm-wood. *Thou writeſt bitter things againſt me.*

I find ſome variety of opinion about theſe bitter things. And there are divers ingredients to make up theſe pills.

First, Some expound theſe bitter things, of ſin. *Thou writeſt or ſetteſt down my ſins.* Thou keepeſt an account of all my weakneſſes and tranſgreſſions. There are two who write our ſins. First, *God books our ſins*, that is, he knows the ſins we commit as exactly, as if they were written down before him in a book. The formality of writing is infinitely below God, but the effect of writing, which is the evidencing of what is done or ſpoken, is alwaies before him. Secondly, *Conſcience books our ſins*, Job intends the writing of God, *Thou writeſt bitter things*, which ſome aggravate, as if Job did ſecretly tax God with ſeverity, and had ſaid thus: *I know thou keepeſt a book, thou writeſt diaries and annals, the whole hiſtory of my life: but thou ſetteſt down little of my good works, or of what is praiſe-worthy, thou takeſt little notice of any thing that might render me acceptable to thy ſelf, te amaricent & or commend me to the acceptation of others: only my ſins and failings, which are a bitterneſs to me, thoſe thou ſetteſt down and keep-eſt a perfect account of.* But Job was far from ſuch reflexions upon God, yet we may give a ſafe ſence upon the whole, though we interpret theſe bitter things by ſin; there be two reaſons why ſins are called *bitter things*.

Notas, obſervas, evolvis ea quæ te amaricent & adverſum me exacerbent. Benè facta omittis, ſi quid unquam male egi, diligenter annotas. Merc.

First, Becauſe they provoke God to anger, even to bitter anger, they imbitter the Spirit of God againſt us (*Hof. 12. 14.*) *Ephraim provoked him to anger moſt bitterly.*

Secondly, Becauſe ſin procures us evil and bitter things. Sin is bitter in the effects of it, as well as baſe in the nature of it.

Hence Obſerve,

How ſweet ſoever ſin is in the acting, it will be bitterneſs in the end.

There is a bitterneſs in the beſt of ſin. One of theſe two things doth alwaies follow ſin, Repentance or puniſhment. Repentance is the beſt we can expect when we have ſinned; and they who do not repent ſhall find puniſhment whether they expect it or no. Now, *there is a bitterneſs in Repentance, Repentance is no pleaſant potion.* Though the Saints have a holy delight in repentance, yet (take it in it ſelf) *repentance is no delightful work,*

work, and therefore it is often expreſt by breaking the heart, and afflicting the ſoul; The repentance of the Jews is ſo deſcribed, (*Zac. 12. 10.*) *They ſhall look upon him whom they have pierced, and they ſhall mourn for him as one that mourneth for his only ſon, and ſhall be in bitterness for him.* In bitterness and in repentance at the ſame time. So that let the beſt come of ſin which can come, that we repent and are humbled for it, and repent ſavingly, yet bitter ſorrows, bitter tears, and bitter mournings are the iſſues of it. I believe *Peter* did not ſin very ſweetly when he denied his maſter, but I am ſure after he had done it, *he wept bitterly,* (*Mat. 26. 75.*) But if the ſin be not repented of, then comes the bitterness of puniſhment. Poſſibly a ſin we repent of may receive bitter chaſtenings: God may correct us medicinally, for the ſins over which we have mourned penitently: but if the ſin be not repented of, then he puniſheth for the ſatisfaction of his own righteous juſtice, as well as for the correction of our unrighteouſneſs, and that's a bitter thing indeed. Thus ſin is a bitter thing as the effects of it are bitter: it is a bitter thing alſo as the root of it is bitter. So much that caution of *Moses* to *Israel* imports (*Deut. 29. 18.*) *Left there ſhould be among you a root that beareth gall and worm-wood.* In the ſoil of mans heart there is ſuch a root. Our natures bear nothing but gall and worm-wood, ſinful actions ſprout and ſhoot forth from our ſinful corruptions. Yet this place of *Moses* is to be underſtood, not ſo much of that general corruption which is in our hearts; for if ſo, then he needed not to ſay, *left there ſhould be among you a root which beareth gall and worm-wood.* For every man in the world, regenerate or unregenerate, hath ſuch a root in him: but he means it (as the text hath it) of ſome apoſtatizing or backſliding perſon that ſhould ſollicite others to ſin, ſaying, *Come, let us go and ſerve other gods;* he meant it of thoſe whoſe hearts were hardened and heightened in ſin, whoſe original corruption was drawn out not only to do wickedly themſelves, but to provoke their brethren unto wickedneſs, theſe he calleth emphatically *a root which beareth gall and worm-wood.* For look what a mans own corruption or original ſin is to him, the ſame is another corrupt and ſinful perſon to him, namely, an enticer unto ſin. So the Author to the *Hebrews* expounds *Moses* (*Heb. 12. 15.*) while he uſeth the ſame phraſe, or rather borrows it of *Moses*, *left any root of bitterness ſpringing up trouble you, and thereby*

thereby may be defiled; that is, lest some scandalous persons not only trouble the peace of the whole Church, but also vitiate the purity of some particular members of the Church, by the contagion of their evil example: now, though these Scriptures do rather call sinful persons, then the sin in a person, a *root of bitterness*, yet those persons are therefore called so, because of their sin, and their sin is a root which as it defiles others, so it destroys themselves. When the Apostle Peter saw he was deceived in *Simon Magus*, he saith, *Now I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity. In the gall of bitterness* (Act. 8. 23.) that is, in a state of sin and impenitency, which will at last bring forth the bitterness of punishment. In that sense also the Prophet threatens, *Isa. 24. 9. They shall not drink wine with a song, strong drink shall be bitter to them that drink it*; that is, it shall be turned into bitterness: we have a common saying amongst us, *sweet meat hath sour sauce*; so here, strong drink, which goes down merrily, shall be turned into bitterness, they shall not drink it with a song. Voluptuous men mingle their drink with singing, but these sorrowful men should mingle their drink with weeping, this would make it bitter to those that drank it. *Solomon* describing the harlot (*Pro. 5. 4.*) with the contentments which she offers, concludes, *her end is bitter as worm-wood*, that is, the end which she brings others to. That's her end in which she causeth others to end, as well as that wherein she ends her self: her end both waies is the same, *bitter as worm-wood*. The Prophet *Jeremy* shuts up his admonition (*chap. 2. 19.*) with *Know therefore and see, that it is an evil thing and a bitter, that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God, &c.* Sin is like that book (*Rev. 10. 9.*) *sweet in the mouth, but bitter in the belly*. Or, as *Abner* said to *Joab*, (*2 Sam. 2. 26.*) *Shall the sword devour for ever? knowest thou not that it will be bitterness in the latter end?* Yea, we may call every sin a bitter thing, not only in reference to the future effects of it, but in reference to the present taste of it. Sin is often bitter, not only in the belly, but in the mouth: it is bitterness not only in the end, but in the beginning, yea, the very sweetness which is in sin promotes the bitterness of it. For as, in nature, sweet meats liberally fed upon, beget choler, and beget bitterness in the stomach: so these sweet morsels of sin, upon which the soul feeds, cause bitter tastes and sour humours, disaffecting both soul and body, and troubling the whole man.

Secondly,

*Non mirum est
peccata quæ
primum dulcia
videntur amari-
tudines voca-
ri, cum dulcia
omnia in ama-
rorem & bilem
facile commu-
tantur.* Pined.

Secondly, *Bitter things* are the displeasure of God, take it abstractedly from the punishments which usually are sent out after *Scribere amarit.* Thou writest *bitter things against me*; that is, thou art angry *ritudines est* with me. A man of a bitter spirit, and an angry man are the same. *cum ira et indignatione discernere extremi supplicij sententiam.* (*Dan.* 8. 7.) In the vision of the hee-goat and the ram, it is said, *that the hee goat came close unto the ram, and he was moved with cholera against him*, so we translate: it is the same word in the Chaldee, which we have here in the Hebrew: he was moved with bitterness, that is, he was very angry. So (*Hab.* 1. 6.) the Chaldeans are described to be a *bitter and an hasty nation*, that is, an angry nation. Anger is bitter both to those who are angry, and to those with whom we are angry. Again (*Pro.* 17. 11.) *An evil man seeketh only rebellion*, it is this word, *he seeketh only bitterness*, which we translate *rebellion*, because they who indeed rebell are full of wrath, rage, and bitterness. The word is used in the same sence upon the surprise of *Dauids* carriages by the Amalekites at *Ziklag*, 'tis said, *the soul of all the people was grieved, or bitter* (*1 Sam.* 30. 6.) that grief was properly anger, as we may collect by the effect of it, *for they spake of stoning him*, stoning is an high act of angry revenge. The learned Physitians tell us that bitter things are naturally very hot; anger and displeasure are the heat of a mans spirit; *anger is the boyling of the blood about the heart*, as Philosophers teach. So that bitterness being caused by heat, we may well express bitterness by anger, which hath so much from heat. Hence *cursing* (which is an act of anger) and *bitterness* are put together (*Rom.* 3. 14.) as also *bitterness with wrath*. *Eph.* 4. 31. Thus here, *Thou writest bitter things*, or *bitterness against me*, is, thou writest thy self angry and displeased with me. And so the words [*against me*] have an accent, a weight in them: as if he had said, *Thou seemest to vary the course of thy dealings towards me*, both in reference to former times, and in reference to other persons: *thou wast not wont to be thus bitter against me*, and towards others thou art sweet and gentle (*Isa.* 54. 7.) In a little wrath I hid my face from thee, for a moment, but with everlasting kindness I will have mercy on thee; that is, the experience which thy people have had of thee, and such have been my experiences: but now thou seemest to run another course, *Thou writest bitter things against me.*

Taking bitterness for anger, I might Observe,

Y y

That

That God ſometimes appears very angry with thoſe whom he entirely loveth.

He ſeems to be all gall when he is nothing but honey, to burn with wrath when an everlaſting flame of love is kindled in his breaſt. I have lately inſiſted on this point, therefore I forbear.

Again Obſerve,

The anger of God is very terrible, it is a bitter thing.

There is no dallying with divine diſpleaſure.

Thirdly, Others reſtrain theſe bitter things to death. *Thou writeſt bitter things againſt me, that is, a decree of death. Death is a bitter thing: bitterneſs and death are joyned in Scripture,* (2 King. 4. 40.) the Prophets ſaid, *Death was in the pot*, when they had put wilde gourds, or bitter herbs into the pot: wilde gourds are very bitter, ſo bitter, that the Perſians called them, *The gall of the earth*; death was in the pot when ſuch bitter herbs were there: So Moſes ſpeaks (Deut. 32. 32.) *their grapes are grapes of gall, their cluſters are bitter, their wine is the poiſon of Dragons*, that is, their grapes, their cluſters, their wine, all their deſigns and actions are all deadly; deadly to themſelves chiefly, but deadly alſo unto others (Prov. 31. 6.) *Give wine unto thoſe that be of heavy hearts*, ſo we read it, give wine unto thoſe that be of bitter hearts, ſo ſaith the Original; And it is plain from the context, that he means it of perſons ready to dye, or to be put to a violent death. The borders of death are bitter, much more death it ſelf; yea, to ſome the borders or approaches of death are more bitter than death it ſelf. When Agag was ſpared by Saul, he doubted not of quarter at the hands of Samuel, and therefore comes out delicately (both in his gate and garbe, 1 Sam. 15. 32.) and ſaith, *Surely the bitterneſs of death is paſt*, that is, the fear of death is paſt; ſurely, if Saul a Souldier ſaved me alive in the heat of the battel, Samuel a Prophet will not kill me in cold blood. In this ſenſe Hezekiah complains (Iſa. 38. 17.) *For peace I had (or on my peace came) great bitterneſs*, that is, the fear of death, as the next words explain, while he ſaith, *but thou haſt in love to my ſoul delivered it from the pit of corruption*. Job had the ſentence of death in himſelf, and he thought God had written that ſentence too. *Thou writeſt bitter things againſt me.*

But I conceive [bitter things] are here intended in a larger ſenſe,

Vox amaritudinis accipitur pro mortis ſententia lata.

Bold.

Analogia ſumitur ex lethalibus quibusdam ventres quæ cum ignea & calidiſſima ſunt, amiſſima etiam ſunt.

Fel terra. Pin.

being put not only for the evil of death, but for all the evils of this life, for whatsoever renders the life of man bitter and grievous. For as bitterness among all tastes is most unpleasant to the palate, so also are afflictions both to the minde and outward man. The seventy agree in this sense so fully, that instead of *bitter things* they translate, *Thou writest evil things against me*. It is frequent in Scripture to call any afflicting evil a bitter thing. (*Ruth* 1. 20.) *Naomi* changeth her name to *Marah*, when she was full of trouble: *Call me not Naomi, that is beautiful, but call me Marah, that is bitter; for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me, I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty*. She had lost all, and was in great affliction, therefore she takes a name suitable to her estate, *Call me Marah*. We read of the waters of *Marah*, that is, bitterness (*Ex.* 16. 23.) All the waters of affliction may be called *Marah*, only the Lord shews his people a tree (as there he did *Moses*) which being cast into them, makes them sweet. Afflictions in themselves are not joyous, but grievous, *Heb.* 12. 11. How grievous or bitter afflictions are to the flesh, hath been heretofore insisted on, therefore I pass it here. *Thou writest bitter things against me*.

And makest me to possess the sins of my youth.

The Hebrew word which we translate to *possess*, signifies also to *dispossess* or *disinherit*, and by consequent to *consume* and *destroy*: so some translate it: whereas we say, *thou makest me to possess the iniquities of my youth*, they say, *Thou dispossessest me by the sins of my youth*, or as the Vulgar, *Thou dost consume me by the sins of my youth*, thou makest me poor and naked, thou strippest me of all my comforts, by reason of the transgressions of my youth. And so, *thou dispossessest me*, is the same with our rendring, *Thou makest me to possess*

The sins of my youth.

What are those?

First, Some expound these words [of my youth] not of *Jobs* youth personally taken, but of his youth relationally taken, that is, of his children. So, *Thou makest me to possess the sins of my youth*, is, thou makest me to possess the sins of my youths, or my young ones who sinned against thee; I seem now to be punished for them, and to inherit my childrens transgressions. So did

Y y 2

Eli,

Eli, God reckoned with him for his childrens sins: *Eli possesst the sins of his youth*, of his relational youth, of his sons whom he did not restrain (as he had power to do) when they were not only vicious but scandalous. Sin is an inheritance which ascends as well as descends: as many children possess or are punished for the sins of *their old age*, that is, of their fathers (they imitating their fathers sins) so many fathers possess, or are punished for the *sins of their youth*, that is, of *their children*, they having not sufficiently reprov'd their childrens sins: while parents neglect their duty to their children, they feel smart for their children; and the father of spirits laies those rods upon their backs, which their foolish indulgence would not suffer them to lay upon the backs of the children of their flesh. But I pass this interpretation as over-reaching the scope of this text, though it contain a general truth.

Quidam ex hoc loco colligunt eximiam viri sanctissimi sanctitatem qui in etate jam confirmata & matura nihil sibi conscivit. Sanct.

Secondly, Others interpret these words as a proof of *Jobs* eminent and exemplary piety and holiness, all the time of his elder and more confirmed years: as if God could find little or nothing to charge him with as sinful, after he came to be a man and was master of himself. 'Tis said by the reporter of *Cardinal Bellarmine* in his life and death, that when the Priest (according to the Romish custom) came to absolve him, he could not remember any particular sin to confess, till he went back in his thoughts as far as his youth. If it were so, I must say, that how great a scholar soever this *Cardinal* was in *books*, he was but a mean scholar in *his own heart and life*, in which the best Christians see sin enough to confess and bewail in the best times, yea, the better any one is, the more he sees his own sinfulness. The oldest and sincerest of Saints in this life, needs not go a day back, much less back to the beginning of his knowing daies, his youth, to find matter of confession, seeing he sins every day, yea, every hour. Yet thus they report of *Bellarmino* to advance his piety, that, if he had not confest the sins of his youth, he could not tell what to confess. In this sence, the present exposition makes *Job* speak to God, *Thou makest me to possesst the sins of my youth*, as if all the sections and parts of his life had been unblamable. But this favours not the spirit of *Job*, who, as he was very confident of the sincerity of his heart, so he was well acquainted with the sinfulness of his nature, and saw himself not only a sinner, but much sin, all his life over.

Thirdly

Thirdly, *Thou makeſt me to poſſeſs the ſins of my youth*, is, Thou makeſt me to poſſeſs or remember all my ſins : *Job* had the whole courſe and tenour of his life in view. Old age and youth are the two extremes of mans knowing time upon the earth : We can hardly remember what we were, or what we did before the daies of our youth, though before that we are evil, and do evil. Man is born in ſin, and he ſins almoſt as ſoon as he is born, but thoſe ſins fall not under our own obſervation. *Auſtin* ſaid of himſelf, I know not the ſins I committed in my infancy, yet I know that then I ſinned ; which he proves, *becauſe he had obſerved anger and envie in ſucking children.* *Job* goes not back to the ſins of his infancy and childhood, which others might remember, but he goes as far as himſelf could remember, even to the ſins of his youth : Theſe he poſſeſſed, or the thought of theſe poſſeſſed him. *That poſſeſſes a man which his mind runs much upon.* God is therefore ſaid to make him poſſeſs the ſins of his youth, becauſe the dealings of God with him cauſed him to recollect and read over all his ſins, eſpecially the ſins of youth.

Fourthly, *To poſſeſs the ſins of youth*, is, To feel ſorrow or pain *Pena eſt quaſi* for the ſins of our youth. We may be ſaid to poſſeſs the ſins of *culpa proinata* our youth two waies ; firſt, when we feel the ſmart of them ; ſe- *& filia, atq;* condly, when we are affected with the filthineſs of them in our *adeo ipſe homo* riper years. Some old men poſſeſs the ſins of their youth another *grandævus &* way, namely, by delight : For, as moſt delight in the act of ſin, *ſenex ſuccedit* and not a few are delighted in the hopes of ſin, a ſin to be com- *sibi ipſi puero* mitted pleaſes them with a promiſe of future pleaſure, *& adoleſcenti.* *To mor-* Pined. *row ſhall be as this day* (ſaid thoſe Epicures, *Iſa.* 5.6.) and much more abundant. They taſted the ſweet of ſin before they came at it. So, there are ſome that take delight in the ſins that are paſt : They that are old in ſin, can talk merrily of, and contemplate ſweetly upon the ſins and vanities of their youth ; and in this they do not only poſſeſs the ſins of their youth, but re-act the ſins of their youth : For, ſo often as a man remembers a ſin which he hath committed with content, he commits it again. Holy *Job* did not poſſeſs the ſins of his youth thus ; he reflected upon them to mourn over them, and repent afreſh for them, not to make merry with them, he chewed them over again in his thoughts, not as ſweet morſets, but as gall and wormwood. *Thus he was made to poſſeſs the ſins of his youth.*

Fifthly, *The ſins of youth are poſſeſſed*, When the guilt of them
flies

flies in our faces, and our fears that they are not pardoned, return upon our spirits: In this sense also (possibly) God made *Job* possess the sins of his youth. He was as much (or more) exercised with inward terrour, as with outward trouble; and when God hid his face from him, he saw his sins with open face.

Hence observe,

First, *Youth is easily overtaken with sin.*

Young men are least able to foresee the issues, to resist the temptations, or keep out of the waies of sin. The Prophet describes the childhood of Christ, our *Emanuel*, under the notion of childehood in general, which knows not how to refuse the evil and chuse the good (Isa. 7. 15.) Paul saith of himself (1 Cor. 13. 11.) *When I was a childe, I spake as a child, I understood as a childe, I thought as a childe*: all in him, or done by him, was childish, when he was a childe. 'Tis but a little better (ordinarily) and sometimes it is much worse in the next step of mans life, which is youth. He that is a youth, thinks as a youth, speaks as a youth, acts as a youth; all in him and done by him is youthful, that is, imperfect and immature, subject to miscarriages and mistakes. David puts, and answers the question (Psal. 119. 9.) *Wherewithall shall a young man cleanse his way?* Young men are apt to go foul waies, or to defile their waies, and therefore need instruction how to cleanse them. And David praies in special, that God would pardon the errors which he found in that paragraph of his life, *Psal. 25. 7. Remember not the sins of my youth.* And besides, the obnoxiousness of youth to sin in general, *Youth hath its proper sins.* The Apostle writing to *Timothy*, an holy man, yet a young man, exhorts him (2 Tim. 2. 22.) *Fly youthful lusts*, look to that, there are lusts which hang upon youth, and dog that season of life more than any other, there are certain sins to which we are peculiarly endangered in each division of our lives: As every calling, every place, every relation hath its special sins and temptations, so hath every age of life. Old men are passionate and covetous, men of middle age are revengeful and malicious, young men are precipitate and voluptuous. The Hebrews call a young man *Nagnar*, which springs from a root, signifying to shake off, or to be tossed to and fro, implying that such are unconstant to their own resolutions, and apt to shake off the gravest counsels. Hence the Apostle cautions not only *Timothy* but *Titus*, *Let no man despise thy youth*: as if he had said,

Furiosus juvenibus animi habitus. Plat. lib. 2. de Leg.

said, thy youth lies open to contempt, because it lies so open to sin: **keep to the rule, and thou wilt keep up thy reputation. Be thou watchful over thy self, lest thou be despised:** For, I conceive, the charge is not so much given unto others (though that be a good sense) as unto *Timothy* himself. *Paul* puts it close upon him, *Let no man despise thy youth*, do thou so behave thy self, that none may have so much as a colour or pretence to despise thee. How he might do so, his next advice directs: *Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity,* (1 Tim. 4. 12.) Make it appear that thy wisdom and understanding have out-stript thy years; make it appear that all gravity doth not wait upon the hoary head; make it appear that some, even in the bud and blossome of nature, are ripe in grace, and mature in holiness; write after this copy, and all will either imitate thee, or not contemn thee: Thus aged *Paul* lessons and cautions his young scholar *Timothy*, as knowing the disadvantages of youth, and the temptations it subjects us to.

Secondly, Observe,

That sins of youth may prove the sufferings of old age.

As young men who are very active and venturous receive bodily bruises and blows in the heat of youth, which they feel and groan under when they are old: so likewise the sins which young men venture upon and make light of, may press their souls, and lye heavy upon their spirits in old age. *Job* speaks of some wicked old men (chap. 20. 11.) whose bones are full of the sins of their youth, which shall lye down with them in the dust. The sins of some old men are young: while their bodies grow weak, their lusts grow strong: such shall feel more smart of them in old age, than ever they found pleasure or delight in them in youth: Their bones shall be full of them, though their bellies are never full of them. It is a sad meeting when young sins and old bones meet together: And it is possible that even they who have truly repented of the sins of youth, may yet feel the grief of them in old age: For though such shall not be punished for the sins of youth, yet they are often chastened for them; and though God will not remember their sins against them, yet he may give them such mindings of them as will make their hearts to ake, and themselves cry out, What fruit have we of those youthful vanities whereof we are now ashamed, and wherewith we are now pained? *If our youth be not given as first-fruits unto God, he usually gives us* (yet in
merc)

mercy to his) bitter after-fruits : Give God the possession, yea, the dominion of thy youth, lest thou say (as *Job*) he makes me possess the sins of my youth.

Seek first the Kingdom of God, seek it first in intention, in the first place, and with the best of thy desires and endeavours: Seek it also first *in time*, let him have the flower of thy youthful services, lest thou taste the fruit of youthful sins.

Thirdly, Observe,

That a godly man looks often upon present sufferings as the chastenings of his former sins.

God did not afflict *Job* for his former sins, for he told Satan (Chap. 2.) *Thou movest me against him without cause*, that is, without any such cause as thou hast pretended and suggested, I find no affected unrighteousness in him: yet *Job* saith to God, *Thou makest me to possess the sins of my youth.* He look'd back upon his life, and saw such failings and corruptions as might call for the rod of this sharp and severe correction. Whatsoever Gods aim is in afflicting, it well becomes the best of Saints to have an eye upon their sins when God hath them under his afflictions. They who are freest from the fear of Gods revenging hand for sin, are readiest to remember their sin when they feel his correcting hand.

Fourthly, Observe,

Sins formerly repented of, and pardoned, may be presented to the soul as unpardoned.

Some conceive *Job* under that temptation, while he was under this affliction. The tenour of the covenant of grace is, *I will forgive their iniquities, and remember their sins no more: and when their sins come to be searched for, they shall not be found, because I have pardoned them.* God never revoked any of his gracious pardons, nor doth he ever re-charge pardoned sins: yet a godly man may remember his old sins with new fears that they are not pardoned. As it is one of Satans devices to fill them with assurance of pardon who are under guilt, so to fill those with doubtings that they are not pardoned who are acquitted from guilt: while it is an easie thing with a soul to sin, it is also very easy for that soul to believe the pardon of sin: But when once Christ helps us to dispossess our souls of the power of sin, how doth Satan labour to possess our souls with the guilt of it! yea, God himself may, for a time, or for our tryal, make us possess the

the guilt of it; and leave us to the questionings of paſſed pardon. In ſuch a caſe the ſins which have been pardoned are pardoned again, not that the firſt pardon is recalled, but cleared, and faith ſtrengthened that we are pardoned. For though there are no degrees in pardoning grace it ſelf (in ſanctifying grace there are, that doth or ſhould grow every day in us, and we encrease in it with the encrease of God) yet pardoning grace may have an encrease as to the perſon pardoned. All the ſins of a believers youth are pardoned, yet he often wants evidence of his pardon: The grace of God knows no decay, but there are decays in our ſpirits and upon our faith about it; and thoſe ſins whole commanding ſtrength is broken, may ſtand up in much condemning ſtrength. *Thou makeſt me to poſſeſs the ſins of my youth.*

Laſtly, Obſerve,

That in times of affliction believers are apt to have miſgiving thoughts about the pardon of ſin.

Affliction carries with it a renovation of guilt, though it be no argument of guilt; As puniſhment is the daughter of guilt, ſo affliction is ſomewhat akin to puniſhment. Now, becauſe he who is but afflicted often thinks himſelf puniſhed, and he that is puniſhed ought to acknowledge himſelf guilty, hence it comes to paſs that he who is but afflicted thinks himſelf under guilt, he is full of fears that his ſins ſtand ſtill upon his own ſcore, and that God is reckoning with him upon that account. When the womans ſon was dead, ſhe ſaid to the Prophet, *Art thou come unto me to call my ſins to remembrance, and to ſlay my ſon?* (1 King. 17. 18.) Her ſorrows brought her ſins to remembrance, and then ſhe feared that God contended with her for her ſins. God maketh us to poſſeſs the ſins of our youth, when in old age (as it follows) he puts our feet in the ſtocks.

Verſe 27. *For thou putteſt my feet alſo in the ſtocks, and lookeſt narrowly into all my paths, and ſetteſt a print upon the heels of my feet.*

I ſhall add only a word of this and of the next verſe, becauſe both are but an aggravation of *Jobs* ſufferings, about which he hath ſpoken ſo much before.

For thou puttest my feet.

As if he had said, *Thou proceedest with all severity against me*. *Me coeres istis as against a grand malefactor, thou layest me fast by the heels.* It is usual to put offenders into prison or into the stocks. Some translate this word by *shackles*, some by *stocks*, some by *prison*; *Job* amplifies his misery under all these notions. His afflictions were to him as a prison, as stocks, as shackles. The Church expresseth her sufferings in this metaphorical language (*Lam.* 3. 5, 6, 7.) *He hath builded against me, and compassed me with gall and travel; he hath set me in dark places, as they that be dead of old: he hath hedged me about that I cannot get out, he hath made my chain heavy.* *Jerusalem* was as a prisoner loaded with irons, bound in chains, and enclosed round about with thick and mighty walls. Such was *Job's* condition, *Thou puttest my feet in the stocks,*

And lookest narrowly into all my paths.

Amplificatio
est artissime
custodiae, Pin.
Singulis his
malis circum-
cludens me tan-
quam armatis
custodibus, Jun.

This good man was not only a prisoner, but a close prisoner. His paths were looked narrowly unto, his troubles like armed keepers went with him whithersoever he went: if at any time he was let out of the stocks, a watch was set upon him lest he should escape; or rather it was with him as with those prisoners who are narrowly watcht while they are in closest prisons. When *Peter* was in prison, the keepers watched at the door, and more then that, *he slept between two souldiers, bound with two chains*, (*Act.* 12. 6.) Thus narrowly was *Peter* looked unto; and thus in allusion was *Job* looked unto: *Am I a sea or a whale, that thou settest a watch over me?* was *Job's* question, in the 7th chapt. His assertion here, *Thou lookest narrowly into all my paths*, seems to carry the same intendment; thither I refer the Reader for the further clearing of this.

Yet others give the meaning thus, *Thou observest all my actions*, and then *paths* are taken metaphorically; so the *seventy* translate, *Thou takest notice of all my works*: Which reading bears a proportion to the proceedings of a Magistrate, who having attached an offender, and laid him fast, looks and enquires into his life, and examines his particular offence, that so a charge or an inditement may be drawn up and brought in against him at his tryal. The next clause runs in the same strain.

And

And ſetteſt a print upon the heels of my feet.

Mr. Broughton tranſlates from the letter of the Original, *And thou leaveſt thy prints upon the roots of my feet.* The roots of the feet are, ſay ſome, the ſoles, ſay others, the ſteps of the feet. And whereas we tranſlate *the heel*, which is the hinder part of the foot, the word is tranſlated alſo by the forepart of the foot, which is divided into toes, as the root of a tree divides it ſelf; But though there be ſome variety about the particular ſignification of the word, yet the general ſence is, That *Job* proſecutes the allegory of a priſoner.

First thus, *Thou ſetteſt a print upon the heels of my feet*, that is, *Thou followeſt me* as it were at the heels; *Thou doſt not only watch my paths, but even telleſt my ſteps.* If I do but ſet down my feet, thou printeſt upon the very ſame place, and ſo it falls in with the ſence of the former claſſe.

Or Secondly, He, in theſe words, complaineth of his ſoreneſs by reaſon of this imprifonment, *Thou ſetteſt a print upon the heels of my feet*; the ſhackles and the chains which are upon me leave their marks behind them in my fleſh, my feet, the very ſoles and toes of my feet ſwell with my heavy fetters. *Job's* condition was like that of the afflicted Jews in the Prophet (*Iſa. i. 5.*) *The whole head was ſick, and the whole heart was faint, from the ſole of the foot even unto the head, there was no ſoundneſs in him, but wounds and bruises.* There was a wound in the very ſoles of his feet, that is, he was all over wounded, or afflicted quite through. As *Paul* ſaid, *I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jeſus*, ſo might *Job*; *Paul* had marks or prints of his ſufferings for God, *Job* of his ſufferings under the hand of God.

I will not draw out any particular obſervations from theſe words, ſeeing they all tend (which hath been more than once obſerved already) to ſhew

First, That God caſts his outward diſpenſations towards his choiceſt ſervants into forms of greateſt rigour and ſeverity.

Secondly, That great afflictions often draw out great complaints from the choiceſt ſervants of God.

Thirdly, That the moſt patient man may ſometimes let fall words of impatience under the hand of God.

Where faith is higheſt it is not always at the ſame height, and

Radices pedum
ſunt vel veſti-
gia vel planta.
Coc.

Radices pedum
vocat ipſos pri-
mores vel ex-
tremos pedes
qui in digitos
quaſi radices
partes dividun-
tur, Jun.

Simpliciſſimum
puto, ſignum
tibi facis, i. e.

amotas omnia
veſtigia mea,
Merc.

Ita me quacun-
que incedam
ſollicite obſer-
vas ut ubicun-
que pedem poſi-
tu quoque
veſtigium
figas, Bez.

Vel ut ſenſus
ſit, ſe nervo &
cippo adeo con-
ſtringi & pre-
mi ut vibices
appareant. Lav.

Veſtigia in
tue uſq; ad ex-
tremos pedis
articulos per-
tingunt, ut
quum pes ſontis
totus uritur
gravitate com-
pedum. Jun.

where patience hath a perfect work, some of its works may be full of imperfection. But I pass these, and shall only note two things.

First, The several stairs or steps by which *Jobs* spirit ascended to the highest sence of his afflictions. Here is a sevenfold gradation, in this and the precedent verses. 1. God hid his face. 2. He counted him as his enemy. 3. He broke him like a leaf. 4. He writ bitter things against him. 5. He made him possess the sins of his youth. 6. He puts him into prison. 7. He watched him lest he should escape, and followed him step by step. What could be added to these sorrows? might not *Job* say with the Church in the *Lamentations*, *Was there ever sorrow like unto my sorrow? They that are greatest in holiness, may be greatest in sufferings.*

Secondly, Note,

Job still keeps his eye and heart upon God in all his afflictions.

THOU hidest thy face. *THOU* countest me thine enemy. *THOU* pursuest me. *THOU* writest bitter things against me. *THOU* makest me possess the sins of my youth. *THOU* puttest me in the stocks. *THOU* settest a print upon the heels of my feet. He sees God in all, and fears not to make him the Author of all these evils: We honour God as much in acknowledging him to be the fountain of all the evils we suffer, as of the good things we enjoy.

The 28th verse is joyned by some to the next chapter, as if that whole chapter were but an explication of this verse, or at least this verse the preface to that whole chapter.

Verse 28. *And he as a rotten thing consumeth, as a garment that is moth-eaten.*

And he.

Who is that? He changeth the person from the first to the third, he doth not say, *I*, but *He*, though he meaneth himself: such speaking is frequent in Scripture, and hath been noted before in this book.

He as a rotten thing, &c.

As if he had said, I am not able to continue under these afflictions,

etions, or bear these pressures any longer. I faint, I fail, I decay, I die. He asked the question what he was (chap. 6. 12.) *Is my strength the strength of stones? or is my flesh brass?* Here he tells us what he and his strength, what he and his flesh are, even as a rotten thing, as a garment that is moth-eaten.

We have here a double similitude, both implying his insufficiency to stand in the hands of God. 1. Of a rotten thing. 2. Of a garment eaten with moths. I consume, and how? as a rotten thing. The Hebrew is concrete, I consume as rottenness; rottenness it self is consuming, and rottenness consumeth any thing it toucheth. Time will consume that which is sound, but that which is already rotten, how quickly doth it consume? how can that hold out against decay which is a decay? *I consume as a rotten thing.*

And as a garment that is moth-eaten.

David compares man under affliction to a moth, as here Job to a moth-eaten garment; Psal. 39. 11.. *When thou with rebukes dost chasten man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth.* Moths have so little substance in them, that they have scarce any subsistence. The least touch crusheth and moulders them into nothing: A moth is as weak as weakness it self, yet it eats out the strength of the strongest garment. A moth-eaten garment is scarce a garment; The beauty of it is defaced, and the usefulness of it is departed. Mans best garments of honor and riches, are little better then a moth-eaten garment, (Jau. 5. 1, 2.) *Go to now ye rich men, weep and howl for the miseries that shall come upon you, your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten.* Where the Apostle is conceived to invite rich men (from which they think themselves at greatest distance) to mourn over their miseries. First, because they treasure up riches of which they make no use, but let them corrupt: and because they provide wardrobs of apparel which they wear not, but the moths eat them up. Secondly, because they lay out their strength and time in gathering a perishing portion, riches which are corruptible, and garments which are meat for moths. As if he had said, how vain are you who labour for that which is more then corruptible? your riches are actually corrupted, and your garments, how careful soever you are to perfume and preserve the are more then subject to moths, the moth actually eats them.

them. Now (I say) if mans best garments are little better then a moth-eaten garment, what is a moth-eaten garment? and then what is that man (such a one *Job* counteth himself) who consumeth as a garment that is moth-eaten? Surely the spirit of this holy man could not go lower for a comparison then the effects of moths and rottenness.

By which self-abasement he seems to argue with God for compassion and sparing mercies: as if he had said, *Could I bear these sorrows any longer, I would not so earnestly beg an end of them: but alas! if they do not end speedily, I must: My strength is gone, and I am but rottenness; Thou who tearest me as a Lion by open and violent afflictions, dost also eat me, as a moth, by secret and silent consumptions.*

I might here also draw out divers Observations about the frailty of man. As first, *That man is but weakness and rottenness.* Secondly, *That man cannot hold out against the hand of God.* Thirdly, *That even some of Gods chastenings are destroyings and consumings to all the strength and lustre of the outward.* Fourthly, *That a believer in affliction is apt to mis-judge the issues of his own condition.* But because these points have occurred upon other texts of like sence with this, therefore I only hint them, and shall shut up this whole Chapter, with this brief admonition from the conclusion of it. How should we labour to please God in walking uprightly with him, before whom we cannot stand when he is angry with us? how should we labour to live in his favour, by whose displeasure we are suddenly consumed? And if the chastenings of God consume those whom he loves, how will his judgments consume those whom he hates? *When thou Lord with rebukes dost chasten man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume,* Psal. 39. 11. How then will his beauty consume when God with severest revenges chastens man for iniquity? *Our God is a consuming fire,* he can consume us as a rotten thing, and as a garment that is moth-eaten, therefore let us (ask and) have grace that we may serve him acceptably with reverence and godly fear.



J O B Chap. 14. Verse 1, 2.

Man that is born of a woman, is of few days, and full of trouble.

He cometh forth as a flower and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow and continueth not.

IN the last verse of the former chapter (which some connect with this) *Job* shewed how poor and pitiful, how weak and miserable a thing man is under the afflicting hand of God; and he did it under the shadow of a twofold similitude. First, *Of a rotten thing.* Secondly, *Of a garment which is moth-eaten.*

He prosecutes the same argument, in the first and second verses of this chapter. From all drawing down this expostulatory conclusion, *vers. 3. And dost thou open thine eyes upon such an one? &c.*

Verse 1. *Man that is born of a woman, is of few days, and full of trouble.*

Job doth not say, *I that am born of a woman, am of few days;* but, *Man that is born, &c.* He speaks in the third person, rather than in the first, for two reasons, as I conceive.

First, To shew that those miseries which were fallen upon him might fall upon others; *No temptation had taken hold of him, but such as was common to man.*

Secondly, He speaks thus, the more to abase himself; The third person put for the first implies contempt. He thinks himself scarce worth the naming, who doth not speak of himself in his own name. *Man that is born of a woman, &c.*

Man is here described two ways, first, in his original or procreating cause, *Woman.* Secondly, in his state or condition, and that from a double adjunct: first, of time, *He is of few days:* secondly, of affliction, *Full of troubles:* Both further illustrated

by y

Tertie persona pro prima usurpatio contemptum denotat.
Bold.

by two similitudes, first, of a flower, secondly, of a shadow: Of all which this is the sum or the result, *He continueth not*, vers. 2.

Man that is born of a Woman.

That is, Every man, or (as we say) every mothers child. Mr. Broughton adds an Epithete borrowed from the signification of the Hebrew word *Adam*, *Earthly man born of a Woman*. The first woman was (in a sence) born of a man; but since all men are born of a woman: And as the first man received his proper name *Adam* (which is now become an Appellative, or common to all men) from the matter out of which he was formed, earth, or red earth, *Gen. 2. 7.* So the first woman received her proper name (which is now become an Appellative, or common to all women) from the matter out of which she was formed, the flesh and bone of man, *Gen. 2. 23.* And *Adam* said, *This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh, she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man.* And as in our language the woman hath but a syllable more in her name then the man, so also in the Hebrew, there it is, *Ish, Ishah*, with us, *Man*, *Woman*. The Rabbins have an Observation, That in the words *Ish* and *Ishah*, the letters of the name of God, *Jah*, are contained, which is (say they) an argument or token of the gracious presence of God with husband and wife, while they walk in that relation according to the Will of God; but if they depart from that, God departs from them, and taking the letters of his own Name from their names, there remains nothing but *fire* (so the words denuded of Gods Name signifie) between them both.

But to the Text; Man is here spoken of as born of a woman, rather then as begotten by man, and that (possibly) for these three Reasons.

First, Because the formation and production of man is from the woman, in her the body of man is framed by the mighty power of God, and all the pieces of it put together; and in her man receives his life and quickening. Hence it was that *Adam* who at first called his wife *woman*, because she was taken out of man, calls her afterwards *Eve*, because she was the mother of all living, (*Gen. 3. 20.*) And upon this ground some Nations have made a Law, that all descents should be reckoned by the mother, because the

Mulier dicitur
virago quia de
viro sumpta.

In **וְנִשְׁאָר**
& **וְנִשְׁאָר**
Continetur no-
men Dei **יְהוָה**
Quod est sym-
bolum gratiose
Dei presentie
si maritus &
uxor juxta Dei
præcepta vi-
vant, si ab eis
recedant, &
Deum recedere
ab ipsis, ut u-
triusque nomen
excluso **יְהוָה**
maneat **וְנִשְׁאָר**
ignis. Buxtorf.

the mother gives the greatest contribution towards the birth and bringing forth of man. *Apud Lycios si quis per-*

Secondly, He speaks of man as born of a Woman, thereby leading us to the Original of mans sin. The woman was Satans *contetur qua familia ortus* instrument to ensnare the man: Sin began at the woman, though &c. *A ma-* it was finished by the man. Adam charged his sin upon the *tribus genus* Woman sinfully, to excuse his sin, *The woman whom thou gavest suum repete-* to be with me, she gave me of the Tree and I did eat. Gen. 3. 12. Paul re solebant, charged the sin of man upon the Woman holily, to humble Wo- *quod pluri-* man for that sin, 1 Tim. 2. 14. *Adam was not deceived* (that is, he *ma substan-* was not first deceived) *but the woman being deceived, was in tia qua con-* the transgression. While we remember, that we were born of a *stamus ma-* Woman, by whom sin came into the World, we cannot but re- *terna sit.* member and be convinced, that we came sinners into the *Plut. de Clar.* World. *Mulier.*

Thirdly, He speaks of a man born of Woman, to minde man *cap. 9.* of his weaknesse. Sin and weaknesse enter'd Man at the same time; and the Woman is not onely a weak Vessel, because of her transgression; but the weaker vessel, because of her constitution. (1 Pet. 3. 7.) Man being born of a Woman, the weaker Vessel, must needs be a Vessel of weaknesse. The Apostle saith, *God sent forth his Son made of a woman* (Gal. 4. 4.) Which imports, not only the Mystry of Christs birth, that he was made of a Woman (a pure Virgin) without the help of man; but also, the frailty of Christ in his birth, that he was born into the World passible, mortal and infirm, because born of a Woman. Hence when men act weakly or below men, they are in Scripture called or compared to Women (Jer. 51. 30.) *The mighty men of Babylon have forborn to fight, they became as women*, that is, weak and pusillanimous. So the Prophet Isaiah describes the degenerate Governours of Judah (Chap. 3. 12.) *As for my people* (saith the Lord) *women rule over them*, that is, men rule over them, whose spirits are Efeminate, and whose courages rises no higher then that of Women. Some of the Superstitious Heathen, to advance the strength and abilities of their Goddesses *wisdom*, fancied that he was born of a Father without a Mother. And here I conceive the Principal intendment of Job in leaving out the mention of Man, and ascribing the whole Production of man to the Woman, was to imply, or rather to prove how weak and frail a piece of flesh man is by nature. *Hanc de patre ferunt sine matris federe nationem.* Maat nus in Paia Hym. 112.

A a a a

Hence

Hence Observe,

The Original or birth of man speaks the frailty of man.

As that which is impure cannot send out that which is clean, so neither can that which is weak produce that which is strong. As man breeds that in him which will consume him, so he is bred of that which shews he must consume. If it be asked how a garment frets when it is not worn, or how Timber wastes when it is not used: we answer, the garment breeds a moth which frets it, and the Timber a worm which eats it out. If it be also asked, how man decays when no outward violence appears against him, we may answer, he breeds his own decay, himself gives life to a worm in his root which smites his flourishing gourd to death: thus man breeds his own consumption. But besides this, he is bred of that which doth consume, *Man is born of a woman.* And as God decreed, for the punishment of her sin, *that the woman should bring forth in sorrow* (Gen 3. 16.) so the woman brings forth a sorrowful man. Can we expect any thing but sorrowful from sorrowful? from frail but frail? or from her who is of few dayes and full of trouble, any thing but him who is such himself? So it follows in *Jobs* description of man, where having given us the cause, he proceeds to the effects. *Man that is born of a woman.* Woman is the procreating cause of man, and from her man derives a double effect. 1. *He is of few dayes,* 2. *He is full of troubles.*

Is of few dayes.

קצר ימים
brevis cur-
tiusve die-
rum.

The Letter of the Hebrew is, *short, or cut-short of daies.* Mr. Broughton renders, *short of life.* So the Psalmist (Psal. 89. 45.) *The daies of his youth thou hast shortened, or cut off.* 'Tis said of Abraham (Gen. 25. 8.) that he died in a good old age, an old Man and full. the Hebrew goes no further, *He died full,* full of what? Our Translators to fill up the sense, add by way of explication, *Full of years.* Abraham had his belly full of living before he died, he had not an hungry desire after a day more in this life: he was both hungry and athirst for eternal life. He died *full of years*: but though Abraham was full of years, yet his life came also into *Jobs* reckoning, *Few of daies.*

The daies of man are few or short, First, considered in themselves (Psal. 39. 5,) *Behold thou hast made my daies as an hand-breadth.* That is not long, which is no longer then the breadth of

of an hand. The breadth of the hand is taken two waies, 1. In the largest extent, for a span or the whole space between the top of the thumb and the little finger stretched out. 2. In the lesser extent, for the breadth only of four fingers, which is the measure (as interpreters conceive) which *David* takes of the daies of man.

Secondly, The fewness or shortness of mans daies, may be considered comparatively, and that two waies. First, As man may be compared with man. Secondly, As man is compared with God.

We may collect the fewness of mans daies, now by comparing him with man under a twofold consideration. First, Of what number the daies of man once were. Secondly, of what number they shall be.

First, The daies of man are few now compared, first, with what his daies were before the *floud*, then many men lived, six, seven, eight, nine hundred, and some almost a thousand years, as *Moses* hath reported the genealogy, age, and death of the Patriarchs, from *Adam* unto *Noah* (Gen. 5.) Now, if any man attain fourscore or a hundred years, he is wondrous old, and if any reach one hundred and forty or fifty (as lately one of our countrey men did) he is such a rarity, that he draws more eyes to behold his wrinkled withered face, then any can with their most youthful beauty. I read of one who had been an *Esquire for the body to* *Johannes de Charles the great Emperour of Germany*, who is called in History *Tempore John of Time*; because he lived three hundred sixty and one years. *Galoli M.* Yet three hundred sixty one, is but a few to eight or nine hundred *Armiger* years: and besides the life of that age is not to be cast up by *obiit annos,* what years one man lived, but by what was the ordinany number *361 natus.* of mans years in that age. *Fascic.*

But as mans daies are few, compared with what he lived before the *floud*; so they are fewer compared secondly, with the daies which man might have lived if he had not fallen. The state of innocency had in it a kind of immortality; it was not impossible for *Adam* to die before he fell, but it was possible for him not to die; this is now changed into a certainty, that we shall die, according to that law of heaven (*Heb. 9. 27.*) *It is appointed unto all men once to die.* Now the daies of man are truly called few or cut short, because it is determined they shall end, and that shortly: and though the determed end of these daies is

uncertain to us, yet their end is certainty determined.

Now if the daies of man are few, compared with what they once were, or might have been upon the Earth; how few are they in comparison of what they shall be when he shall be raised out of the Earth? Then the daies of mans life, whether in heaven or hell, in happines or in misery, shall be as many as the daies, or rather as long as the day of eternity.

Again, As the daies of Man are few, compared with what he once had and shall have, so they are fewest of all, compared with the daies of God, so few, that as his daies cannot be counted because they are so many, so ours can hardly be counted because they are so few. *David* who found out a dimention (a hand-breadth) for the daies of man, considered absolutely or in themselves, could find out no dimention little enough for the daies of man compared with God (*Psal.* 39. 5.) *Mine age* (and his Age may be the measure of every mans Age, *Mine age*, (saith he) *is as nothing before him.* All time is as nothing, compared with eternity, what a nothing then is the Age of one man to eternity, which is scarce any thing to all time? Some things created and finite are so great above others, that they are nothing to them: What is the Ant to the Elephant, or the Shrimp to the Whale? What is the whole body of the earth, to the Body of the Heavens? Naturalists say 'tis but a Point. Now if one creature be so far exceeded by another creature, that it is scarce discernable, how indiscernable are all creatures to the Creator, finite to Infinite? As one part of the earth is but a Point to the whole, and the whole earth but a Point to the Heavens, so one part of time is but a moment to all time, and all time is but a moment to eternity, especially to the eternity of God: which is not only as some creatures (by his dispensation) shall have, *an Eternity forwards*, but also as no Creature is in a capability or possibility to have, *an Eternity backwards*, and yet in strict sense, there is neither *forwards nor backwards*, neither past nor to come in Gods eternity: *His being consists in one eternal. Now, or I am, and hath nothing to do with, I was, or I shall be:* and therefore the Age of man is nothing before him; for mans Age though it be as nothing, undivided, is yet divided, *into past, present, and to come. Three nothings, which being added together amount in the total summe to this nothing of the age and daies of man (as David speaks) before God.*

Hence

Hence Observe,

Sin is the shortner of mans daies.

Job leads us to this Observation, while he saith, *Man that is born of a woman is of few daies.* Man born of a woman is sinful man. This truth is so general, that it never received an exception in any one man born, after the ordinary way of a Woman. Christ was born of a Woman, but he was conceived miraculously by the holy Ghost. Man might have been born of a Woman, and yet have been of many daies, if he had not been born in sin. 'Tis the birth of sin in man which is the seed of death: And as sin makes the daies of all men few in Nature, so the sins of some men makes theirs fewer then the daies of Nature. For as though the daies of a good man at the most are but few, yet because of some special goodness they are often prolonged: so, though the daies of a wicked man at the most are but few, yet, because of some special wickedness they are often shortned. Solomon gives us both parts of this Assertion in one verse (*Prov. 10. 27.*) *The fear of the Lord longeth (or addeth to) daies, but the years of the wicked shall be shortned.* And as Solomon tells us positively, they shall be shortned, so David tells us negatively, how much they shall be shortned (*Psal. 55. 23.*) *Bloudy and deceitful men shall not live out half their daies.* Possibly they shall not live out a quarter of their daies, but he is peremptory that they shall not live out half their daies. Thus, as every man because he is a sinner shall live but a few daies, so some shall not live half those few daies, because they are notorious sinners. All men are of few daies, some men are of fewer then a few. The sin of nature shortens all mens lives into a fewer daies, and sins of practice shortens some mens lives into fewer then a few.

From Jobs solemn doctrine of mans short life or few daies, we may draw out many lessons of very serious Admonition.

First, Seeing our daies are few, let us live all our daies: some loose many out of a few, and live not one of their few daies. 'Tis possible to have a being (according to the account of man) many daies, and to have lived none of them, or not to have lived at all. *We live no more of our time then we spend well.* A Heathen said, *he lived no day without a line*, that is, he did somewhat remarkable every day. What a shame it is that a Christian should live a day without a line, doe nothing in it worth the doing!

A a a 3.

Secondly,

Secondly, Be perswaded that your daies are few, It is easie to say our daies are few, but it is hard to believe it: Every age hopes to see the next age. The child hopes to be a Youth, and the Youth to be a Man, the man hopes to be an old man, and he that is an old man hath hopes to be very old, he that is very old, hopes to live more then a few daies yet, or that yet he shall not die these many daies. And because every age hath hopes to live that which is to come, it doth not live that which is present. We should do more work, but that we hope for more daies.

Ab hoc momento pendet eternitas.

Thirdly, Seeing the time of this life is short and hastens out of our hands, let us make haste to lay hold upon eternal life. Our daies here are few, such as a child may count; but daies innumerable, such as no man can count or depend upon them. All our daies are but few, and every man living hath lived a few daies already, possibly thy few daies past are all that thou shalt passe. Say not of Repentance, I will repent to morrow, Say not to Christ when he is tendered thee to day, come again to morrow. *Boast not thy self of to morrow* (saith Solomon, Prov. 27. 1.) *for thou knowest not what a day* (even the day thou now hast) *may bring forth.* Possible this day may bring forth thy death (for the daies of man are few) and then how shall to morrow bring forth thy Repentance, or make thee another offer of a *This-daies refused Christ*; Wilt thou boast of the births of to morrow, when as thou knowest not whether a morrow shall be brought forth to thee; *Man* (whosoever thou art) *was not thou born of a woman?* if so, thy daies are few, thy busineses are many, and there is one thing necessary. We say of some men, that they do much in a little time: and truly how much soever any man hath to do, he hath but a little time to do it in. *Few daies* sure ~~are~~ are but a little time, and all the time we have is but a few daies. Besides, These few daies are all the working-daies that ever we shall have; Let this be a spurre to dilligence and to duty? Hear and obey the counsel of the Preacher (Ecc. 9. 10.) *Whatsoever thy hand findeth to doe, doe it with thy might, for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave whether thou goest.* *In Heaven there is nothing but rest, and in Hell though there be no rest, yet there is no labour. In Hell there is nothing but wages, and in Heaven there is nothing but reward, our whole work lies in the few daies which are on this side both,*

Fourthly,

Fourthly, See in this truth, what false conclusions worldly men make unto themselves, when with him in the 12th of *Luke*. ver. 19, 20, they say to their Souls, *Souls, ye have goods laid up for many years, take your ease, eat, drink, and be merry.* How vainly doe men reckon upon *many years* yet to come, when as their whole time Past, present, and to come can make up but a few daies ! The Apostle *James* rebukes those upon this ground, who forelaid their business but *one year*, how much more are they rebukeable who forelay their pleasures for *many years* ? chap. 4. 13, 14. *Go to now, ye that say to day, or to morrow we will go into such a City, and continue there a year, and buy, and sell, and get gain, whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow : for what is your life ? Is it not even a vapour that appeareth for a little time, (that's at most but a few daies) and then vanisheth away ? So Paul Pleads down a worldly Spirit, (1 Cor. 7. 29, 30. I say brethren, the time is short, it remaineth, that they who have wives be as if they had none, and they that weep, as though they wept not, and they that rejoyce, as though they rejoyced not, and they that buy as though they possessed not, and they that use this world, as not abusing it. We should shorten our joys and our sorrows, we should take up, or draw in our affections about worldly things, because our time in the world is short, and our daies are continually drawing off from the World.*

Fifthly, This should check our envy at the prosperity of wicked men. Their day (of account) is coming, and their daies (of receipt) are going (*Psal. 73. 18, 19.*) *how are they brought to desolation in a moment, and as a dream when one awaketh, so O Lord, when thou awakest, thou shalt despise their image.*

Sixthly, *Let the righteous be patient in afflictions*, all their daies are but few, and therefore their daies of Sorrow cannot be many. *Yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.*

Lastly, Trust not in man, yea, cease from man whose breath is in his nostrils, and whose daies (because they are few) must shortly cease. Place not the hopes of your life in him, who cannot (with warrant) hope for a long life, much less assure you of any comfort of your life : seeing as his own life is empty of daies, so it is as it follows in this Text.

Full of trouble.

Few daies and many troubles make up the character of man. We use to say, *short and sweet*, but here it is, *short and sower, yea, short and bitter*. As some speak much in a little, much matter in a little discourse, many matters in a few words. And as some do much with a little, much good with a little talent. So all men suffer much in a little, much trouble in a little time, many sorrows in a few daies.

Full of trouble.

Uter repletus
satur, ad
ventriculum
& appeten-
tiam refer-
tur.

Est con-
turbari, in-
quietari ali-
quo vehe-
menti doloris
effectu.

Satur Tre-
more Regia.
Plenus ira-
cundie. Pag.

The word which we translate *Full*, alludes to the filling of the stomach, and the satisfying of the appetite with meat. *Trouble is hard fare, but there is plenty of it*. Man usually hath his fill, and never knows the want of trouble. *Ever since man brought forth sin, the earth brought forth trouble. Sin is the seed of trouble, and trouble is all the Harvest we reap by sin.*

The word which we render, *trouble*, contains in it more sorts of trouble than one. It notes not only all kind of outward trouble, but inward trouble, vexing trouble, such as disturbs and unquiets the whole man. Some render it by trembling, so the word is used, *Hab. 3. 16. My belly trembled (or my Bowels were moved) rottenness entered into my bones. Holy men are full of trembling at the holiness of God, and sinful men have reason to be full of trembling at their own sinfulness.* The body trembles when the visions of impendent evil pass before, or are represented to the mind. Others render it by anger, wrathfulness, rage. *Man is full of anger*: and that in a two fold construction, first, passively, he feels the anger both of God and man, the sad effects of mans rage, and of Gods displeasure. Secondly, actively, man is full of his own anger, full of Anger. 1. Against his fellow-brethren. 2. Against God. 3. At the dispensations of God, when God sends him trouble he is angry, when God sends others Prosperity, if it like not him, he is angry. Anger makes the Prosperity of others our trouble, and our own troubles would be little trouble to us if we were not angry with our troubles. Troubles and Anger are well expressed by the same word, seeing most of our troubles proceed from the Anger of God, and are all encreased by our own anger.

For the clearing of *Jobs* Proposition or Observation, That
man

man is full of troubles, I shall present the Reader with a particular of the troubles of man.

The troubles of man are either inward or outward.

Inward troubles proceed from a threefold cause. First, From the terrours wherewith God first exerciseth the spirits of his own people. *Job* was full of these troubles as we have opened before, and so was *Heman*, *Psal.* 88. 15. Secondly, There are Terrours wherewith God vexeth the spirits of wicked men, *Cain*, *Saul*, and *Judas* were full of these troubles, and the Prophet pronounceth of wicked men in general, that they are like the troubled Sea when it cannot rest, *Isa.* 57. 20.

Secondly, Inward troubles arise from the temptations of Satan, we hear many poor souls complaining of these: As that wicked spirit goes about seeking rest and finding none, so he would not suffer any man to rest. Satan is a troubled spirit, and he is a troubling spirit.

Thirdly, Inward troubles arise from the lusts and corruptions of our own hearts. *Paul* who triumphed and rejoiced over all outward troubles, cries out, *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* *Rom.* 7. 24. Who is there that hath any spiritual life, who groans not under the body of this death? One bemoans and weeps over unbelief, another over pride, a third over passions and base fears, a fourth over deadness of spirit and hardness of Heart. These fill the Saints with trouble while they keep them in, much more when they prevail and break out. And as believers are full of trouble because of their own corruption, so also by reason of the corruptions of others. Their hearts bleed at the prophaneness, and their eyes weep at the pride of other men.

These inward troubles are enough to fill us, but as *Ezechiels* roll was full of woes, so our lives are full of troubles both within and without.

Outward troubles are of two sorts.

First, Ordinary, or those which come daily upon us, the labours and businesses of our Callings. The Apostle speaking of and to those that marry, saith, *Such shall have trouble in the flesh,* *1 Cor.* 7. 28. *Flesh and troubles are married together, whether we marry or no, but they that are married marry with and match into new troubles.* All our relations have their burdens as well as their comforts.

Secondly, Extraordinary troubles, and these are of three sorts. 1. Publike in the common calamities which fall, 1. upon the Kingdomes. 2. Upon the Churches wherein we live. 2. Private troubles which are those which befall our Dwellings and Families. 3. Personal troubles which fall upon our own selves. To these three kinds all our outward troubles are reducible, but the particulars of them are almost innumerable. What *Paul* saith of his perils (2 Cor. 11. 26.) we may say of our troubles, we are in troubles by Waters, in troubles by Robbers, in troubles by our own Countrymen, in troubles by the Heathen, in troubles in the City, in troubles in the Wilderness, in troubles in the Sea, in troubles among false Brethren. We are in Weariness and Painfulness, in Hunger and Thirst, in Cold and Nakedness, of all these troubles we may say as he (v. 28.) *They are without.*

Again we have troubles in getting, troubles in keeping, and troubles in loosing the things of this life. We have trouble in doing our duties, troubles for doing our duties, and troubles worst of all for not doing our duties, or for doing that which is not our duties: As some have troubles of conscience, so not a few have troubles for conscience.

Lastly, Besides all these troubles, whether of action or passion, we are also or ought to be (we seldom want occasion to be) full of the troubles of compassion at the troubles of others, though we our selves be free from trouble. Thus *Paul* speaks of himself (2 Cor. 13. 29.) *Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?* And thus *Paul* charges us, *Weep with them that weep,* (Rom. 12. 15.) *Remember those that be in bonds as bound with them, and them which suffer adversity as being your selves also in the body,* (Heb. 13. 3.) Sympathy is a Christian duty. Christ himself (our Head) is afflicted in all our afflictions; we also should be afflicted in the afflictions of one another as fellow members. He that hath no cross of his own, must take up and bear his brothers: And he that hath many of his own must bear a part of all his Brethrens crosses. Now, what between the troubles which we feel, and the troubles whereof we have a fellow-feeling, we must needs be full of troubles, few of daies and full of troubles. The report which old *Jacob* made before *Pharaoh* of this life (Gen. 47. 9.) may be a report of all our lives, when we have lived most, and lived best, *Few and evil have the dayes of the*

the years of our lives been: Yea, though we should have attained (which Jacob said he had not) to the dayes of the years of the life of our Fathers in the dayes of their Pilgrimage. What hath man (as Solomon concludes by way of question concerning man in a natural consideration) of all his labour, and of the vexation of his heart, wherein he hath laboured under the Sun? What hath man of all his labours (much more of all his sufferings) but trouble? For all his dayes are sorrows and his travel grief, Eccles. 2. 22, 23.

From all observe two things.

First, Observe the difference of the life of Saints on earth, and their life in Heaven: Here it is few of dayes, and full of troubles, there it will be full of dayes, and full of comforts: *In thy presence is fulness of joy, and at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.*

Secondly, Observe in this conjunction of few dayes and full of troubles in the life of man, the goodness of God to man. Few dayes are (in themselves) an affliction, fulness of trouble is (to us) a great affliction, but many dayes and full of trouble had been a great affliction. How sad would our condition be if perpetuity and misery, a multitude of dayes and a multitude of troubles had met together in our lives. The curse of Hell is eternity and misery, a life without end, and troubles without end. 'Tis a mercy, when that which is sharp is but short, when that whose very beginning grieves us, ends quickly. Christ having foretold the destruction of the Temple at *Jerusalem*, and the great tribulation which should accompany it, even such as was not since the beginning of the world, no, nor ever shall be, concludes, (*Mat. 24. 22.*) *And except those dayes should be shortned, there should no flesh be saved, but for the Elects sake those dayes shall be shortned.* God did not make the dayes of those troubles shorter then himself had decreed, but shorter then the enemy had determined, or then any wise man, who judgeth onely by the rules of humane policy, could have expected. The troubles of those days seemed to be very long visag'd, but God shortned the dayes that the trouble of his people might be shortned, and that some *flesh*, that is, some men, and those men some of the *Jews* (for there is a double Synecdoche in the word *flesh*) might be saved: That is, with a temporal salvation, from the *Roman* sword and devouring calamities which attended that terrible War. Now as it is a mercy when God shortens the dayes of special trouble,

into which any sort or nation of men fall; so it is a mercy that God hath shortned and lessened the daies of mankind, considering the general trouble into which we are fallen. Let it not be a trouble to us that our dayes are few, seeing if our dayes were more our troubles would be more, and our sorrows would encrease as the number of our years encreased. He that is displeased because his dayes are few, is also displeased because his troubles are so few. **We have little reason to be in love with this life because our dayes are few, and lesse because our troubles are many.** But we have much reason to love God, who when we had procured to our selves many troubles while we live, have contracted and epitomiz'd our lives into a few dayes.

Job having asserted the shortnesse and troublesomenesse of mans life in a direct proposition, proceeds to illustrate both by a double similitude. 1. *Of a Flower.* 2. *Of a Shadow*, in the second Verse.

Verse 2. *He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not.*

Man is like a flower and a shadow, he is but the shadow of a flower, or the flower of a shadow.

He cometh forth like a flower.

Some restrain this similitude to those who die in Childhood or in youth: Such indeed are blasted in their blossome, and cropt in their flower. But as one part of mans life compared with another, may be called the flower of his life, so his whole life laid together may be called a flower, and that is the meaning of this place. As man in his best estate, and in all estates is altogether vanity, so man in his best dayes, and in all his dayes is but a flower.

And whereas there are many Rarities and Excellencies in a flower, three specially. First, Odour or sweetness affecting the smell. Secondly, Beauty and variety of colour affecting the eye. Thirdly, Softnes and smoothnesse affecting the Touch: whereas (I say) there are these three rarities in a flower, Job passeth them all by, and speaks of it not as flourishing but withering, not in its springing up but in its cutting down, or of its springing only in relation to cutting down. *He cometh forth like a flower.*

And

And is cut down.

Death is the fithe which cuts down these flowers, either first, Natural death, 1. By sickness. 2. By age: Or secondly, Violent death, which is, 1. Casual, when a man is slain by accident. 2. Cruel, when a man is slain by murderers. 3. Legal, when a man is slain by the Magistrate. Hence observe,

Man in his flourishing, is near to withering.

He cometh forth and is cut down, his standing is so small that it is not so much as mentioned. We are born to die, and we die as soon as we are born. Christ speaks to the Church, *Canticles* 2. 11, 12. *Rise my love, for loe the winter is past, the flowers appear on the earth, the time of singing of birds is come,* so we translate, but others thus, *The time of cutting is come.* The same word in the Hebrew signifies both to sing and to cut, we taking the former, add the word *Birds* (which is not at all in the Original) to fill up the sense, or to shew what singing is there meant, namely that, which is most proper in the spring when flowers first appear, the singing of Birds. The other reading, as it is clear in the letter of the Hebrew, so it elegantly futes the point in hand. *The Flowers appear, the time of cutting is come;* implying that flowers are cut even as soon as they appear: *Such a flower is man. He cometh forth and is cut down.* Thus David describes him, *Psal.* 103. 15, 16. *As for man, his dayes are as Grasse; as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth, for the Wind passeth over it, and it is gone, and the place thereof shall know it no more.* Though the flower be not cut down with any instrument of Iron, nor cropt by the hand, yet a breath of wind blasts it, yea the gentle motion of the hift. lib. 25. Air quickly blows off its beauty. The naturalist tells us of a plant cap. 13. lib. called *Ephemeron*, because it lasts but one day, as he doth also of 11. chap. 36. a worm called *Hemerobion*, because it lives but one day. Such a *Mirabar* ce-worm is man, or (as the Psalmist speaks) *a worm and no man. Ierem fugiti-* Such a flower is man, or (as we may speak) *a flower and no man. va etate rap-* The heathen Poet gives his wonder and observation of the Rose, *tuam.* that it grows old in the very budding. The Septuagint read the *Et dum nos-* words of *Job* in the same tenour, *He decays like a budding flower, cunctar con-* that is, he decays in his very budding. As if Death did rise *senuisse rosas* early and watch for the flourishing flower, to crop or cut it *Virg. Tan-* down. And though some of these flowers stand till they wither, *quam flos ef-* or as *Solomon* allegorizeth (*Eccles.* 12. 5.) *Till the Almond tree florescens de-* shall wither. Sept.

shall flourish, that is, till gray Hairs; yet all the time of their standing they have been falling, and every hour which increaseth or swells their stalks, hath been also cutting of them down. And it would have been better for some, if they had been actually cut down in that state, which we distinctively call their *Flower*, while they were well-scented and beautiful, whereas standing long, they have not only decayed, but smelt ill upon their stalks. Man in his best estate is vain, and many who have stood beyond that, have proved far worse then vain.

Now lest this first similitude of a flower coming forth and cut down, should not reach the transitoriness of this dying thing called Man; therefore *Job* puts him upon his fullest speed, or rather upon the wing in his motion thorow the world, by a second similitude, which carrieth in it the hastiest swiftness, and the most unsettled chageableness.

He fleeth also as a shadow and continueth not.

Shadows are caused by the interposition of any gross body between us and the Sun. Every shadow is dark, and darkness is but a great shadow. Hence there are two sorts of natural shadows. 1. The shadows of the Night, to which the Church alludes, (*Cant. 2. 17.*) *Until the day break, and the shadows flee away.* 2. The shadows of the day; these are according to the motions of the Sun in continual motion or variation, sometimes on our right Hand, sometimes on our left, sometimes shorter, sometimes longer, and are longest in the evening as the Prophet speaks. (*Jer. 4. 6.*) *The shadows of the evening are stretched out.* When the Sun riseth, the shadows of the night are not, and while the shadows of the day are, they continue not, but receive some change every moment. Such is man, he fleeth as the shadow of the night before the day, and as the shadow of the day till night return again.

He continueth not.

וַיָּשָׁב Stetit,
subsistit, per-
sistit, pro-
mansit.
Unde וַיָּשָׁב
columnae-
recta, a stan-
do dicta.

The Hebrew is, *He standeth not.* A Pillar is expressed by a word of this Root, because of its standing and firmness. Man is not a Pillar but a Shadow, or if he be a Pillar, he is but a Pillar of Smoak, which is carried and scattered with the Wind, as a shadow is altered or changed with the Sun. We read often of the shadow of Death, and our life is but a shadow, because it continueth

contineth not. Death is a perfect shadow, and a shadow is the similitude of our imperfect life: To have no shadow of turning notes the perfection of God, (*Sam. I. 17.*) To turn like a shadow notes the imperfection of man. The Vulgar translates, *He continueth not in the same state.* *Et nunquam in eodem statu permanet.*

There is a threefold state of man. 1. A natural state. 2. A civil state. 3. A spiritual state. The two former of these, are of little or no continuance, the third doth not alwayes continue in the same state.

The natural state of man may be considered.

First, In reference to his body, this suffers an alteration every day, either a perfect alteration, as in those that are young, or a corruptive alteration, as in those who are of full age: Yea, the perfective alteration of the Body tends to a corruptive alteration, and while we are growing stronger, we are hastning, not only to weakness, but to dissolution.

Secondly, The natural state of man may be considered in reference to his mind: This continues not in one state. 'Tis the sole priviledg of God to be one within. *He* (*saith Job, Chap. 23. 13.*) *is in one mind, who can turn him?* Men are in twenty mindes, they cannot but turn. We use to say of several men, *So many men, so many mindes.* But we may observe in the same man, *How many mindes.* **The minde of man is more mutable then the Wind or Weather.** Now he is pleased, anon he is angry, now he likes, anon he dislikes, now he loves, anon he hates, now he wills, by and by he wills not: The Will, the Affections, the Understanding of man, are so often in new habits and changes of Dresse, are shaped in such various forms of Opinion and Judgment, that 'tis hard to say what any mans minde is, and there are not many who know their own mindes.

And as man continues not in his natural state, whether of body or mind; so his civil state is of as little continuance; whether we look upon him, 1. In his Honour. or 2. In his Power. or 3. In his Riches. or 4. In his Relations. I leave the Reader to enlarge upon these common places of mans mutability. Day unto day makes report, and every daies experience is a Sermon of these things: Yea, how many have we seen in one day, honourable and dishonourable, in fulness of power, and emptied of all their power; abounding in riches, and brought to beggery, compassed about with friends and kindred, with wife and children, and yet forsaken

forfaken of all before the evening. *Their inward thought* (saith David, Psal. 49. 11.) *is, that their houses shall continue for ever, and their dwelling places to all generations: Nevertheless man being in honour (power or riches) abideth not.* If he abides, these do not, and if these abide, he doth not; and the longest that both these have abode in any example since the foundation of the world, is not long enough to warrant this conclusion, that, *They did abide.*

Thirdly, Consider man in his spiritual estate, where his continuance is most steddily, yet there he continues not in the same state. Some have a spiritual estate, which is of as little continuance as mans natural or civil state is. The Hypocrite appears to others, and is often conceited of himself full of the flowers of Grace; but he quickly disappears, he is cut down like a flower, and fleeth away like a shadow. The parable saith of such a man, (*Matth. 13. 20, 21.*) *He heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it, yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: that is, he continueth not: His leaf of outside profession falls, and his goodly form of godlinesse without power, breaks to pieces upon the least blast or touch of persecution. And if persecution do not kill his profession, it will die alone, or rather, it will decay alone, for indeed it never had any life.*

Now, as temporary believers have total decayes, and continue not at all in their spiritual estate; so true believers may have temporary decayes. The way of a man in Christ doth not flee like a shadow, but increaseth more and more unto the perfect day (*Prov. 4. 16.*) And that Scripture which takes up *Jobs* similitude, comparing *all flesh to grasse, and the goodlinesse thereof to the flower of the field, the grasse withereth, the flower fadeth, doth yet by way of opposition, assure us, that the Word of God abideth for ever, Isa. 40. 8.*) Now, as the Word of God, so that Grace which is revealed to us and wrought in us by the Word and Spirit of God abideth for ever. And yet, though a state of Grace, wheresoever it is doth continue for ever, yet it doth not continue alwayes in the same state: And that not only because it is gradually changed by way of improvement here (till it take its highest degree in glory, where it shall know no change at all, either by way of abatement or of improvement) but also because it is often changed by way of gradual abatement. *Peter* did not alwayes continue in the same state of faith, nor the Church of

of *Ephesus* in the same state of love, though their faith and love did continue. What soul can say it continues ever in the same degree of spiritual strength, health, life and enlargements? Though the whole time of a Christian in this world be a growing time, yet consider it in parts, and we shall find many declining times. Thus as man continues not at all in his natural and civil state, so his spiritual Estate doth not alwaies continue the same: and so of all it may be said, *He continueth not.*

JOB Chap. 14. Vers. 3, 4.

And dost thou open thine eyes upon such an one, and bringest him into judgment with thee.

Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one.

JOB having shawdowed the frailty of man under divers similitudes, in the close of the 13th chapter, and in the beginning of this, draws down from all this passionate question, at the 3^d verse, *And dost thou open thy eye upon such an one?* Upon such an one as I, who am as a rotten thing, or, as a garment that is moth eaten: Upon such a one as I, who am of few daies and full of trouble: Upon such a one as I, who am like a flower coming forth, and presently cut down: Upon such a one as I, who am like a shadow fleeing away and continuing not; Dost thou open thine eyes upon such an one, and bringest me into judgment with thee? אֵלֹהִים לֹא יִשְׁפֹּט כִּי־יִשְׁפֹּט אִישׁ כִּי־כִּי־יִשְׁפֹּט אִישׁ

Etiam super hunc.

Such an one, is a term of diminution; Job debaseth and lowns himself, *Such an one*, is such a poor one, a man so inconsiderable, a man who besides the common condition of men, which is low enough, is yet brought lower by these afflictions? Terminus
diminuens.

Such an one, sometimes increaseth the sense and heightens it. (*Neh. 6. 11.*) When Sanballat and the Enemies of the Jews by secret practices, and cunning plots would have discouraged Nehemiah, telling him what designs were against him, and perswading him timely to avoid his own fall, that so the work might fall: he answers, *Should such a man as I flee?* such a man, A man in such a place, and having such a power, a man so trusted, and under such engagements, a man upon whose care and conduct

the welfare of a Nation, and the advancement of publick good so much depends? *Should such a man as I flee?* there the sense is raised: But here it falls, *Such an one*, is a poor one, a mean one; Dost thou open thy mouth to speak against, or thine eye to look upon such an object?

Job having considered his own estate in common with that of Mankind, concludes, *And dost thou set thy eye upon such an one?*

Whence Observe,

That the due consideration and knowledg of what we are, leads us to low thoughts of our selves.

There is no man proud of himself, but he that is ignorant of himself: We are lifted up with high thoughts above what we are, because we have not true thoughts of what we are; if once we saw what moth-eaten garments, what rotten things, what fading flowers, what fleeing shadows, what decaying, dying creatures we are, every one would say to God in holy wonder; Dost thou take notice of *such an one*? of so mean an one as I. We should not aspire to be counted *some bodies*, some great ones in the world, but we should look upon our selves as *no bodies*, as unaccountable in the world, such as deserve not, that the great, the high God should vouchsafe us as a cast of his eye. This is *Job's* sense of himself,

Dost thou open thy eye upon such an one as I?

The opening of the eye is taken two waies.

*Oculi Dei
providentiam
denotat.*

First, In a way of Fatherly care and Providence: Thus, *David* speaks (*Psal. 144. 3. Lord, what is man that thou takest knowledge of him, or the Son of man that thou makest account of him.*) So *Job* (*chap. 7. 17.*) *What is man that thou shouldest magnifie him, and that thou shouldest set thy heart upon him, that is, that thou shouldest take care of him, and make such provision for him.* When *Hezekiah* was in a day of rebuke and blasphemy, he spread *Rabshakeh's* railing letter before the Lord, and prayed, *Lord bow down thine ear and hear, open Lord thy eye and see, 2 King. 19. 16.* that is, take care of me and of the people under me; the mouth of *Rabshakeh* is open to threaten and revile, let thy eye be open to see and prevent all the evils which he threatneth.

Further, Opening the eye is an act of little or no difficulty; it is as easie to open the eye as to turn the hand: to give a look

is a small gift. Thus we may understand *Job*, as if he thought himself unworthy of the least motion of Providence. Dost thou vouchsafe to open thine eye upon such a one? I am not worthy thou shouldest take notice of me, or of my condition. A glance of thy eye is more then I can look for.

I will not prosecute this sense, both because I handled it, chap. 7, 17. as also, because though it be a truth, yet, I conceive, it is not the proper truth of this place.

Secondly, As opening of the eye signifies providence and care *Aperire oculo* to do us good, so watchfulnesse to discover and find out what *los in ali-* we are, or what evil we have done: for as in Scripture to open *quem est in-* the hand is to be liberal, bountiful, and munificent (*Psal. 145. 16.*) *tentis oculis* Thou openest thy hand and satisfiest the desire of every living thing. *eum valde* So to open the eye upon a man, notes diligent inspection over *observare*, him, or an accurate observation of his wayes, goings, actings, to *quid rerum* bring him to a strict account for all: he that passeth a man by, *agat, Druf.* and will not bring him to judgment for what he hath done, is said (in our common speech) to connive or wink at him. He that winks at another, will not see though he doth see. It is said (*Act. 17, 30.*) That God winked at the former times of their ignorance, but now he commands all men every where to repent, because he hath appointed a day wherein he will judg the world. There is another meaning of winking which I have opened (chap. 8. 4.) but this is a truth, God winked, that is, he did not take much notice, or follow men up and down, to see what they did in those times, because they were in the darkness of ignorance; they had but little light to do good by, therefore he was not so strict to observe what evil they did; so that the opening of the Eye, implyeth a critical, or judiciary inspection, as well as a paternal, fatherly, careful inspection; and so we are to Expound this place, as is evident from the sixth verse of this chapter, where *Job Contextus* desires that which is contrary to opening the eye, the turning *exposcit ut* from him, that he might rest till he shall accomplish as a hireling his *de severitate* daies. He that openeth his Eye to a man, turneth his face to him; *divini judicii* now seeing man is weak, and his daies determined, turn from *loquatur.* him with thine Eye, or why dost thou set thine Eye upon him? Sanct. As if he had said, Dost it become thy greatness and Majesty, to take such strict notice of all the motions of so poor a creature as I am? or dost it become thy goodness and mercy to be so severe to watch me so narrowly, to look after me so exactly, that I cannot stir

but thou observest it, and numbreſt my very ſteps?

*Cum ſtoma-
cho & indig-
natione le-
gendum eſt:
Itane ſuper
hoc folium &
ſti; u' am, &c.
Mer.*

Job ſpeaks in a kind of paſſion, and the gloſs which ſome inter-
preters put upon his words, renders them, not only very unbecom-
ing, but very ſinful; as if he thought it altogether unfit for God
to eye what he did, or to bring him into judgment for it. Hea-
thens ſaid of their *Jupiter*, he was not at leiſure to look at ſmall
matters; but it is a great diſhonour to God, to ſay he cannot
look after the ſmalleſt matters and motions of the creature: We
cannot diſhonour God more, then by counting this a diſhonour
to him. *The loweſt perſons and actions are not beneath the obſerva-
tion of the moſt high God.* *Job's* intendment was to move God to
compaſſion, not to put himſelf beneath his conſideration.

Hence obſerve,

*That our frailty is a good pleadable argument to move God to deal
mildly and gently with us.*

I am a weak poor creature, therefore pittie me, therefore
ſpare me; we muſt never plead our fulneſs before God, but we
may plead our emptineſs; we muſt never plead our goodneſs, nor
our worthineſs, but we may our ſinfulneſs and unworthineſſe.
The later clauſe of the verſe ſhews us what *Job* deſires, when he
deprecates the opening of Gods eye upon him.

*Verbum eſt
futuri tem-
poris, quod
debitum con-
notat & de-
corum, ut
Gen. 18. 25.*

*Huc perti-
nent omnia
que hoc loco
copioſe diſ-
ſerit *Job* de
miſeria hu-
mane vite,
ut Deus tam
miſereatur,
necitam du-
ris experi-
mentis pro-
bet. Merl.*

And bringeſt me into judgment with thee.

Obſerve here the change of the perſon: He ſpake before in
the third perſon, *Doeſt thou open thine eye upon ſuch an one?* here
he ſpeaks in the firſt perſon, *Doeſt thou bring me to judgment
with thee?* He relates to his perſonal condition and makes ap-
plication to himſelf, *Doeſt thou bring me into judgment with thee?*
I ſhall not ſtay upon theſe words, having often (from like paſ-
ſages) ſhewed how unable man is to ſtand before God in judg-
ment. *Job* inſiſteth much upon it, being provoked by his friends
charging him with a conceit of ſelf-righteouſneſs, which he diſ-
claimed as often as they charge him with it; *Doeſt thou bring me
to judgment with thee?* Men of eminency will not contend with
 thoſe who are much inferiour to them, they cannot honour
themſelves by ſuch conteſts, as was lately ſhewed at large (cap.
13. 25.) upon that expoſtulation, *Wilt thou break a leaf driven to
and fro?* &c. Thus *Job* pleads here, *Doeſt thou bring me to judge-
ment with thee?* I am no match for thee, there is no equality
between us, thou canſt not raiſe thy Name by caſting me down:
thou

thou mayest honour thy mercy and compassion, by pardoning me, but not thy power by overthrowing me. *The worst and weakest of sinful men, are the best foil to set off the beauty and strength of mercy.*

Yet men are not therefore free from the judgments of God because they are low and mean, for God will judg the lowest, even such as lie on dunghils, or grind in the Mill; the great God of Heaven and Earth will bring the least to judgment, as well as the greatest. The Rabbins have a conceit that some shall be exempt or priviledg'd from the judgment of God hereafter, because they endure much pain and poverty here; but these are vain conceits: All must come to judgment, though but few shall stand in judgment. God will glorifie his Justice in casting the lowest of wicked men to the lowest hell, as well as high and lofty ones.

Take one Observation from both parts of the verse laid together, *Doeſt thou open thy eye upon ſuch an one as I am, and bringeſt me to judgment.*

There muſt be a diſcerning of the perſon and cauſe, before either can be brought to judgment.

You muſt open the eye to ſee what the man is, and what he hath done, before ſentence be given upon him. The Law forbid the Judg to receive gifts, becauſe gifts blind the Eye of the Judg; a Judg had need to have his Eyes open, to diſcern the cauſe and very circumſtance of it. If a gift put on the receivers Eye, how ſhall the Judg diſcern him that gives it. We cannot judg what we do not know, nor can we judg aright without a right knowledg.

Job having pleaded his weakneſſe, pleads his ſinfulneſſe.

Verſe 4. *Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one.*

As if he had ſaid, Lord, if thou openeſt thine eye upon me, thou muſt needs find me unclean, full of ſin and deſiled with ſin: Nor canſt thou expect any other of me, for, who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Surely not one; therefore do not open thine eye ſeverely upon me, do not bring me into judgment with thee, thou art of purer Eyes then to behold iniquity.

I ſhall firſt open the words and give the ſenſe as they contain an entire propoſition, *A clean thing cannot be brought out of*

an unclean, and then I shall consider *Jobs* scope in using this plea,

Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?

776 *mandi-
tiam niten-
tem denotat.*

*Non immun-
das, pulchra
est illius tur-
pitudinis &
sordium ap-
pellatio in
quam squalor
quidam mor-
rentis animi
& sorditatus
habitus, cru-
oris & san-
guinis macu-
le, nubila,
crassa omnia
turbida im-
mundaque
cadunt.
Pined.*

The word which we render *clean*, signifies shining, beautiful, a substance so pure and transparent that we may see through it, so pure that it is free from all spot or defilement, from all blackness and darkness: Who can bring such a clean thing out of an unclean? The *Hebrew* word (*Tama*) comes near the word (*Contaminatum*) which is used by the *Latines* for unclean; and it speaks the greatest pollution, the sordidness and filthiness of habit, the Goar of Blood, the muddiness of Water, whatsoever is loathsome or unlovely, noisome or unsightly: All these meet in and make up the meaning of this word, *Who can bring a clean thing out of this uncleanness?*

Clean and unclean may be taken two wayes, either first corporally and externally. Or secondly, morally and internally, *Job* speaks not of the former, the uncleanness here meant is moral or internal.

Which is also twofold, First, the uncleanness of our natures. Secondly, Of our actions, the uncleanness which lies in the inward man, puts it self forth in the outward man, and so we are unclean both within and without.

Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? This question may undergo a threefold exposition. First thus, who can bring a morally clean person out of a person originally unclean? The word which we render *bring* is *give* in the *Hebrew*, who can give a clean thing out of an unclean? Which may well referre to the birth of man; So the word is used (*Gen. 17. 16.*) God promiseth *Abraham* to bleſs *Sarah* and give him a son of her: So here, Who can give a clean thing? That is, cause it to be born of an unclean? *Job* layes his hand upon his birth-sin; as if he had said, all men are naturally unclean, therefore the Children born of them are unclean too.

Secondly, *Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?* May refer to the action of the same man, take *Job* or any other person who is morally unclean by nature, this man being unclean cannot bring forth a clean thing, that is, a clean action; As the root is, such is the fruit; we are such fruit as our parents are, unclean both, and our fruit is such as we the parents are, unclean both.

Third-

Thirdly, *Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?* May note the change of the same person from his moral uncleanness into moral cleanness, who can make a person clean who was born unclean? The Hebrew particle (*Min*) rendred, *out of*, *in originis* hath a double use, sometimes it notes the Original of a thing, *& mutationis nota.* That which is Originated is like its Original. Again it notes also change and mutation, Who can bring a clean out of unclean? That is, Who can change unclean into clean? Besides the word which we render *bring*, signifies *to make a change*, Isa. 51.12. *Who art thou that art afraid of the Son of man, who shall be made as the grass?* The Hebrew is, who shall be given, that is, changed as the grass. *in dare pro-
efficere usur-
patur.*

Thus we have a threefold interpretation of the words. The first respecting the extraction of one person from another. All persons are unclean, because they come from an unclean root.

A second referring to the actions of the same person. That which is done by man cannot but be unclean, because man himself is unclean who doth it.

A third respecting the change of the person himself from what he was. Who can make an unclean person clean? this is a work too hard for any Creature, Man or Angel. Man cannot by his own power make a natural man, much lesse a spiritual man, he cannot give any man a *being*, much lesse a holy *being*.

First, Observe from the connection, *Job* having described mans life, *Few of dayes and full of troubles, like a shadow, and like a flower cut down and withered:* He now descends to mans uncleanness, as if he would lead us to the Spring-head, and cause of all our sorrows: This is the method and dependance of *Jobs* discourse, which teacheth us,

That the length of our troubles, and shortness of our lives, are caused by the corruption and uncleanness of our Natures.

Are our lives troublesome? Is the scian of our actions intangled? Sin hath done it. Is the thread of life cut off? Have we but a few dayes? Sin hath procured this. We are unclean, therefore we are dying, fading, withering. In all, whether personal or publike troubles, we may answer our selves with this, we have that we deserve, the root of our miseries is within us, we may thank our own evil dispositions that our condition is

so

so full of evil. God made man upright and happy, he gave him a life wherein he might have continued long and long, even for ever. Though man might have died as created, yet there was no necessity he should die till he had sinned. Both the troubles of this life and death it self, are debts of penalty for our uncleanness; and when we are once perfectly cleansed, we shall never be under any arrest for these debts.

Secondly, Observe,

Sin is an unclean thing.

They who see the face of sin in the Glass of the Law, see it the most ugly and deformed Object in the World. If Vertue could be seen, she would attract all Eyes and Hearts to her: *Vertue is an invisible beauty.* So if sin could be seen, all Eyes would turn away from it: *Sin is an invisible deformity.* The Spirit of God doth as it were strive for comparisons to set out the ugliness of sin: It is compared to the blood and pollution of an Infant, (*Ezek. 16. 6.*) to the corruption of a rotten Sepulchre, (*Rom. 3. 13.*) to the scum of a seething Pot, (*Ezek. 24. 11, 12*) All these comparisons shew us somewhat of the ugliness of sin, but it is ugly beyond compare. How sad is their mistake who think to adorn themselves with sin? Who put on pride as a cloak upon their backs, and Unrighteousness as a Crown or a Diadem upon their Heads: Who boast as if they had then *Holy-day* cloathes on, when they are cloathed with *Unholiness*, and make to themselves *Beauty-spots* of the *blackest spots* of sin! The Apostle, (*Col. 3. 12.*) calleth us to put on another kind of Dress, *To be cloathed with Humility, Meekness, Humbleness of Mind, Charity*; these are shining, pure, white Raiment indeed: Our righteousness is a filthy ragg, if we boast in it, or would be justified in it: Then how filthy a ragg is our Unrighteousness, especially if we boast of it, or justify our selves in it!

Thirdly, Observe,

Man being naturally unclean, his Children and Posterity are unclean too.

John 3. 6. *That which is born of the flesh, is flesh.* The Copy cannot be better then the Original, nor the effect nobler then the cause; *This flesh hath an ill name all the Scripture over*: 'Tis no wonder if that which is poysonous bring forth a poysonous seed, or that a stinging Serpent procreates a stinging Serpent; a Toad a Toad; or that a wolf brings forth a wolf: The son of an Ethiopian

opian is also an Ethiopian : Our Father was an Amorite and so are we. The natural constitution of every thing is transmitted by natural generation, man is himself unclean, and all his issue is like himself, God created man pure in his own likenesse after his image, and man begets man impure in his own likenesse after his image.

There are two things in this uncleanness.

First, There is a privation of that comeliness and beauty which was stamped upon man in his creation: Some define Original uncleanness to be *only a privation of original righteousness*, and that it is one part of it, all agree, but there is something positive in it too ; for it is as if a man who is richly cloathed, excellently adorned, should not only have all his goodly Garments pulled off) which were an abasement to him) but should be thrown into the dirt, or have dirt cast upon him ; *Josephs* brethen took off his party-coloured garment, and then threw him into a pit ; so doth sin : That strips us first of our godly array our original righteousness ; and then drenches or daubs us rather all over, or over head and ears in mire and filth.

There are seven considerable properties in this natural uncleanness.

First, It is an Internal uncleanness, a spot upon the garment is bad enough, a spot upon the face is far worse, but an infection in the flesh is yet worse, and that is worst of all which is seated in the bowels, or hath seized on the vitals : the uncleanness here spoken of is not as a spot upon the garment, or dirt upon the face, but a sore in the flesh, (a soar is nothing but the uncleanness of the flesh gathered to a head) yea, it is like a soar in the bowels or intrals, in the heart or liver : for *even the minde and conscience is defiled*, Tit. 1. 15.

Secondly, It is an abiding uncleanness, all the water in the Ocean cannot wash it out, all the fire in Hell cannot burn it out, Hell fire shall never consume this dross ; Though wicked men in this life be cast into the fire of Gods judgments, and he kindle it with the bellows of his wrath, yet their dross remains, *reprobate silver shall men call them*, (Jer. 6. 30.) they will not be purged in this life, and in the next life they shall not be purged. They shall be forever in punitive flames, but they shall not finde (as Papists dream) any purgative flames. The corruption of nature will depart from them. The uncleanness of the Mettal is the

D d d d

dross

drofs of the Mettal, the drofs of Mans Nature is harder to separate then the droffe of Mettal; the lead in that infernal furnace will not consume, nor will the Billows break, yet the droffe of Lust will not out of Reprobates. And as fire and brimstone shall not fetch this uncleannesse out of Reprobates in the next life, so Grace and Mercy do not fetch it fully out of the Elect in this life; they who are renewed and regenerate, are yet in part Carnal and corrupt. *Grace is in a continual conflict with corruption, but Glory only makes a total conquest.*

Thirdly, It is an abounding uncleannesse, it is not in the hand or face only, but in and upon the whole Man, it goes quite through. *There is not the least part free: Man from Head to Heel, from top to toe is described unclean, (Psalm. 14. Rom. 3.) The Lord looked down from Heaven, to see if there were any that did understand and seek after God: they are all gone out of the way, and become vile, vile all over.* There is a double universality of this uncleanness. First, it doth defile all men. Secondly, all of man, *Not one man in the world but is unclean, and not one part in any Man but is unclean; survey him in his Understanding, Will, Memory, Affections, Conscience, Eye, Hand, Tongue, Feet, all the parts of the Body, and powers of the Soul are unclean.* As Grace sanctifies, so sin defiles all where it is, even Body, Soul, and Spirit, 1 Tim. 5. 23.

Fourthly, It is an active or a powerful uncleannesse, stirring up an unholy war in man, against the holy will of God: an inordinate appetite accompanies it, or it is an inordinate appetite causing the inferiour parts of the Soul stubbornly to resist the superiour, or the superiour basely to submit unto, and serve the inferiour. This makes Lust a King and Reason a Slave, yea, this would make Grace a Slave. As Pauls experience teacheth us, *serviunt, aut (Rom. 7. 23.) But I see another law in my members warring against the law of the mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members.* That is, it doth captivate me in part, and hath a design to captivate me altogether.

Fifthly, it is a diffusive, or an infectious uncleannesse, like a Leprosie or a Plague. Now, as good is by so much the better, by how much it is the more diffusive, so evil is so much the worse by how much it is the more diffusive. This evil is diffusive two wayes. First, by way of Propagation, from Adam to all his posterity. Secondly, by way of Imitation, and so one man doing evil,

*Concupiscen-
tia est appe-
titus inordi-
natus per
quem superi-
ora inferiori-
bus turpiter
serviunt, aut
inferiora su-
perioribus
contumaciter
reluctantur.*
Janson.

evil, another ſeeth and catcheth it, he is infected, and defiled with it: That's the reaſon why *David* (as ſome conceive) was ſo exceeding ſtrict in this point (*Pſal. 101. 7.*) *He that worketh deceit ſhall not dwell within my houſe, he that telleth lies ſhall not tarry in my ſight*, his wickedneſs may ſpread, it may poiſon the heart of a King, I will not put my ſelf upon the temptation. The Apoſtle (*Heb. 12. 15.*) warns the Church of this danger, *leſt any root of bitterneſs ſpringing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled.* Though this uncleanneſſe doth not infect by imitation only (which was the error of *Pelagius*) yet it infects ſtrongly and commonly by imitation; Hence *Moses* chargeth the people of *Iſrael* to have nothing to do with the *Canaanites*, leſt they ſhould be miſſed by their example. And when they acted againſt this rule, they quickly broke all rules, (*Pſalm 106. 36.*) *They were mingled with the Heathen* (then immediately follows) *and learned their works.* He means not works of Art, or Agriculture, of peace, or war, but of falſe worſhip and idolatry; *they ſerved their idols which was a ſnare unto them.* Evil men endanger the good, as bad humours do the blood, or an infected houſe the whole neighbourhood.

Sixthly, It is a bewitching and enſnaring uncleanneſs, All the bodily beauty in the world did never entice ſo many as the deformity and foul face of ſin hath. It was Prophecied of Chriſt (in reference to his outward appearance) *He hath no form nor comelineſs, there is no beauty that we ſhould deſire him.* Hence the Prophet foreſees what entertainment he was like to finde in the world: *He is deſpiſed and rejected of men, we, as it were, hid our faces from him and we eſteemed him not, Iſa. 53. 2, 3.* Beauty and comelineſſe are the attractives, the Loadſtone of Love. Chriſt was not loved becauſe he did not appear beautiful: Luſt is loved though it be unbeautiful: There is no form or comelineſſe in ſin, nothing why it ſhould be deſired, yet it is admired and highly eſteemed by all ſorts of men. They dote upon it, and run mad with Love for it, as the Choiceſt Beauty in the world.

Seventhly, it is a murderous and a mortal uncleanneſſe, there is no eſcaping death if we live in it. This uncleanneſſe doth not only ſpoil our inward beauty, and put the ſoul out of faſhion, but it deſtroyes the life of the Soul, it is the ruine as well as the diſhonour of man.

Now as all men because unclean, bring forth an unclean personal issue; (which riseth from the second Exposition.) So because every person is unclean, the actions which he brings forth are unclean too. *Whatsoever sinful man doth, is sinful*: Consider mankind under two ranks, Regenerate and Unregenerate; The Unregenerate are so unclean, that whatsoever they do is altogether unclean. *Do men gather Grapes of thorns, and figs of thistles?* Make the tree good and the fruit good, while the tree is evil the fruit cannot be good. 'Tis because the heart is evil, that as (God complains *Gen. 6. 5.*) *All the imaginations of the thoughts of the heart are onely evil continually.* The imagination gives shape to every thing which the mind works upon, all that man frames and fashions, all the Creatures he makes within him are unclean. The works of a natural man are unclean for the most part in the very matter, but all that he doth is unclean for the manner; his Hands are unclean, and (by his handling) he makes all unclean. The mind and conscience of a wicked man being defiled, he is *abominable, disobedient, and to every good work reprobate*, (*Tit. 1. 15.*) that is, he knows not how to do a good work, he is not handsome-handed, or rather not handsome-hearted at any good work: He knows neither how to contrive, nor act, much lesse to delight in any thing that is good; that's the meaning of being *Reprobate to every good work*: though he may set about many good works, yet at best they do but bungle at them all. *Some good works are so good that no man can do them all*, they cannot be done sinfully, though they may be done imperfectly. Such are, to love God, to fear, to believe, to trust, to rejoice in him, and to hope for his mercy. These works are so good, that, as no wicked man can do them at all, so, no good man can sin in doing them. These works are so good, that the least degree of them is good, and therefore though they are acted often weakly yet they are never acted wickedly. But there are good works which a carnal man will be dealing in, as to pray, to hear the Word, &c. These he will be doing, but he is reprobate to the doing of them, he defiles and spoils them in the doing. The case is put, *Hag. 2. 14.* *If a man that is unclean carry holy flesh; shall it not be unclean?* The Prophets states it affirmatively, ceremonially holy flesh is defiled with our spiritually unholy flesh, The uncleanness of the giver renders his gift unclean, *The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord*: their prayers are

are sometimes called *howlings* (Hos. 7.) sometimes *bablings*, (Mat. 6.) Their Prayers at best are but *wouldings* and *wishings*, or meer presumings, such were *Balaams* (Numb. 33. 10.) they desire mercy more then grace, they will have the end, but care not to walk in the way.

Now if the prayers of carnal men be unclean, how unclean are their Oaths? if their mercies be cruel, how merciless are their cruelties? if their praises of God be filthy, how filthy are their Prophanations, if the best they can do be bad, how bad is their worst?

Secondly, The works of the regenerate are unclean also. *Job* speaks his own case, he was a holy man by Gods own testimony, yet he saith, *Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags*, (Isa. 64.6.) A regenerate man sins in all he doth: we do not say, all he doth is sin, as the Papists charge us; The work of Gods Spirit upon us, and *Mala mea* the motions of grace in us are pure, yet, as clean water passing *pure mala* through an unclean Pipe, receives a tincture of that uncleanness, *sunt, & mea* so sinfulness cleaves to our holiest actions, we the instruments *sunt: bona* being sinful. *autem mea*

If it be objected, That which is sinful is a transgression of the Law, but good works are not a transgression of the Law, therefore they are not sinful. *nec pure bona sunt nec mea sunt. Hugo.*

I answer.

First, Sin is a transgression of the Law, but every thing which hath sin accompanying it, is not a transgression of the Law: We cannot argue from the abstract to the concrete.

Secondly, There is a twofold transgression of the Law, First, against the matter of any duty required. Secondly, Against the manner in which the Law requires that duty should be performed; In this latter sense there is a transgression in the best works of Believers; Where is the Soul that is carried out in Prayer, &c. with that love and delight, with that purity and fervency of Spirit, which the Spirituality of the Law doth call for?

If it be again Objected, that good works in the regenerate are the work of the Spirit of God in them, and therefore are not sinful.

I answer.

That which proceeds from the Spirit as the immediate and
D d d 3 sole

sole cause, is not sinful : But good works are not wrought solely by the Spirit of God, the Spirit and mind of man are subservient and instrumental in that work : Now an effect which proceeds from divers subordinate causes, takes its qualification from the lowest as well as from the highest. Though a Writer have exact skill, yet if his Pen be naught, the Writing cannot be exactly.

Lastly, (say some) good works are pleasing to God, but that which is sinful doth not please God.

To which I Answer.

That our good works do not please God as done by us, but as done in Christ : *He is the Altar which sanctifies all our gifts*, he is our High Priest who takes away the iniquity of our holy things, that we may be accepted in all our offerings. 'Tis through a Mediatour that God is pleased with what we do, and pardons our defects.

Thirdly, The words may import a change of the same person, *Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean ?*

Hence Observe,

Man cannot convert or make himself clean, nor can any man make man clean.

Man can no more sanctifie himself or another, then he can redeem himself or another. But you will say : man is often exhorted to cleanse himself (*Isa. 1. 15. 18. Wash you, make you clean,* 2 Cor. 7. 1.) *Having these promises, let us cleanse our selves from all filthiness of flesh and Spirit.*

I Answer.

First, If these Texts be understood of persons Regenerate, as that of the Apostle clearly is, then it is true, they who are already cleansed may further cleanse themselves, for though we do not co-operate in the first conversion (there we are meerly passive) yet we do in the second : We cannot begin holiness, but we may and ought to *perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord*. We cannot work our own Salvation, but we may work out our own salvation. They who have received the Spirit, are fitted to carry on Spiritual work.

And though the Text in *Isaiah* speak of persons unregenerate, yet it is not in vain to say even to such, *Wash you, make you clean*. An unclean person may apply himself to the means of cleansing : They who have no grace, yet have reason, and God deals with

us, as with rational creatures; **They who are dead in sins and trespasses, may hear the word of life and live. The dead and unclean are invited to the means of life and cleansing, and God in the use of means hath promised to cleanse and enliven them, but man of himself cannot cleanse himself, nor make himself differ from what he is, or others are.** As our sanctification is the will of God, so it is the work of God too. 'Tis neither our own power nor the power of any creature, which gives us the new creation: so the last words of the verse resolve, *Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?* *Not one.*

That is, No man can do it. Some read this interrogatively, or by way of question, *who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? cannot one? or is there not one that can?* we negatively, *There is not one that can: no man can do it.*

If we take (as we safely may) the former reading; the question affirms; Is there not one? yea, there is one, and but one who can bring a clean thing out of unclean: As the Scribes said. (*Mar. 2. 7.*) *Who can forgive sins but God only?* So, who can cleanse a soul but God only? *God only of unclean, can make us clean.* He who can raise up children to Abraham out of stones, and alter the course of nature, he can make the Leper change his spot, and the Blackamore his skin; to God nothing is impossible, but to man many things are impossible, and there is nothing more impossible then this, the cleansing of the spiritually unclean. As that only can make and continue a cold body hot, which is it self and of its self is hot, so he only can make an unclean thing clean, who is himself and of himself is clean; God is clean, and there is no spot in him, therefore he can make us clean, and take out all our spots. The Chaldee Paraphrast takes the word, *One*, for the description of God, or for the name of God. And so this place is paralleld by that (*Mar. 2. 7.*) which according to the letter of the Greek is to be read thus. *Who can forgive sins but one, or the one God?*

se mundus est. Unde quicquid mundum est a Deo munditem habet. Aquin.

וְאֵל אֶחָד Unus accipitur a Chaldeo pro Dei descriptione & quasi nomine. Clarum satis est respici mediatorem, qui unus purificationem faciat.

Some expound this *One*, strictly of Jesus Christ, who was designed to that work when he came into the world, who is the great cleanser: In whom a Fountain is opened to wash for sinne and

וְאֵל אֶחָד
Non unus,
nonne unus
Quis dabit
mundum ex
homine con-
taminato pec-
catis, nisi De-
us qui unus
est, qui re-
mittat ipsi?
Chald. Non-
tu qui solus
es. Vulg.

*Solus Deus
potest ex im-
mundo facere
mundum
condonando
peccata, nam
cujus pecca-
tum condona-
tum est pu-
rus est. Dru.
Sicut de fri-
gido facere
calidum est
ejus, quod per
se calidum
est ita de im-
mundo facere
mundum est
ejus qui per*

and for uncleanness, and *whose blood cleanseth from all sin*: who purifieth those he saveth, and purgeth all he pardoneth. Christ is that *clean, that holy thing*: and he being so, make us so, yea, *He is made to us of God, Wisdom, Righteousness and Sanctification or cleanness*. Christ bringeth clean out of unclean, by removing a twofold uncleanness. First, the guilt of sin when he pardons. Secondly, the filth of sin when he sanctifies.

From this whole Doctrine of mans uncleanness we learn.

First, *Man cannot oblige God.*

What hath man to boast of? will any one be proud of his filthy garments, or of a spot in his face? much less can we boast who have a spot upon our hearts, and are all over spotted in our lives.

Secondly learn,

That in our confession of sin, we should lay our hand upon our birth-sin.

The sense of our natural uncleanness humbles most, and we should often reflect upon it, that we may be more humbled. We cannot shift off our sin upon the temptation of Satan, or the solicitation of men, we have the root of the matter in our selves. Job was most sensible of the sinfulness of his nature: he had many sins, but he saw this at the bottome of them all. 'Tis our duty to mourn for Actual sins, but chiefly for Original sin. We must weep over the streams, but most over the Fountain; The heart of man hath not laboured more to corrupt any truth, then this about mans natural corruption. *The old Pelagians dressed up Nature very fine, and would at least perswade us it is not so bad, or so opposite to good as some would make it. They told us it hath some disposition to good, and that if helped a little it would come on to do good. Papists at this day follow them, if not in the same steps, yet in the same path: both have darkned Counsel by words without knowledge.*

Thirdly, *If all men be unclean, then every man had need of washing. Thou shalt not wash my feet, said Peter to Christ. Job. 13. 8. If I wash thee not (saith Christ) thou hast no part in me.* Then he praies, Lord (wash) not only my feet but my head, &c. Christ speaks thus to every soul, *If I wash thee not, thou hast no part in me*: Christ is a clean Head, and he cleanseth all his members.

Fourthly, *The thoughts of our general uncleanness, should provoke us to bless God that there is a Fountain open for sin and uncleanness.* Fountains should be as welcome to those who are filthy,

as to those who are thirsty. When *Hagar* was thirsty, God shewed her a fountain of water: When *Sampson* was very thirsty, God opened a fountain in the jaw, and he drank and was revived. We are filthy, and God opens a fountain, he sends our leprous souls to the *Jordan* of his sons blood, and bids us wash and be clean. When our hands are unclean, is not a basin of water welcome? Our souls are unclean, O how welcome should the blood of Christ be unto us? Bless God, who, as he hath discovered our uncleanness, so a fountain, that we may wash away our uncleanness. How wonderful are the workings of divine love, that we who were all spots and unclean, shall at last be presented unto God perfectly clean, *not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing*, Eph, 5. 27.

Having opened the sense of these words, as they contain this doctrinal proposition of mans naturall uncleanness: there is yet somewhat considerable in their scope; why doth *Job* speak of this uncleanness?

Some give this for his scope, as if *Job* from his original uncleanness would extenuate his actual uncleanness, or that he ought to be pardoned by grace, because he was polluted by nature: As if he had said, *Lord I was born unclean, and therefore mine punishment cannot but be unclean, no wonder ill fruits grow on me who have a root of evil in me*. But this was (in proportion) as far from the minde of *Job*, as it is from the truth of God. Besides, that we are born sinful and cannot chuse but sin, is no extenuation, but an aggravation of our sin. That, sin is not only our act, but our nature, leaves us without desert of pity, or matter of apology. We pity a man who by accident hath taken poison and is sick of it, but who pities a serpent, whose nature is poisonous, or such creatures to whom poison is as food. When *David* confesseth (*Psal. 51.*) *In iniquity was I conceived, &c.* Was he sowing a fig leaf over his uncleanness? or covering it with carnal reasonings? no marvel though I bring forth sin, who was conceived in sin. No marvel if I conceive iniquity, who was brought forth in iniquity. No, *David* doth not excuse, but humble himself, he doth not challenge mercy, but see his need of mercy because he was conceived in sin, and brought forth in iniquity. Such also (*I conceive*) was the frame of *Jobs* spirit in making this confession, and pouring out this complaint upon his birth-sin.

His design was, First to abase himself, to make his heart mor

E e e e

pliable

pliable and ready to submit unto saddest dispensations. I am unclean, and is it any wonder that the holy God, who cannot behold any unclean thing, should throw an unclean person over head and ears into the Waters of affliction?

*Ex nature
sue corrupti-
ne sperat De-
um facilius
pertrahere,
adveniam si-
bi dandum ne
se ita gravi-
ter offligat.
Merc.*

Secondly, He speaks this as a motive to compassion, desiring the Lord to mitigate his sorrows while he aggravated his sin, yea to cease from afflicting, because he knew (by reason of this natural uncleanness) he could not cease to sin, till he should cease to be in this world. Thus God himself argues for his own compassions and sparing mercies to the renewed world after the flood: for whereas he had said (*Gen. 6. 5.*) *The imagination of the thought of mans heart is onely evil continually, and therefore I will destroy man whom I have created, from the face of the earth.* Yet at the 8th chap. vers. 21. the Lord resolves thus, *I will not again smite the earth any more, and every living thing as I have done, Why? For the imagination of mans heart is evil from his youth: As if he had said, Though I drown'd the world with water, yet they are not washed from their uncleanness, I see water will not fetch out sin, nor my judgments make man holy: I must always destroy if I should destroy as often as men do wickedly, therefore I will not smite the earth in this sort any more.* Thus Job might move the Lord to forbear afflicting him, because he could not (being born in sin) forbear to sin, though in this he aggravates his own sinfulness. We may beseech the Lord to spare us when we act sin, because our natures are sinful: but wo unto those that go about, either to palliate or extenuate their acts of sin, by the sinfulness of their natures.

JOB

JOB Chap. 14. Vers. 5, 6.

*Seeing his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee,
thou hast appointed him his bounds that he cannot passe.*

*Turn from him that he may rest, till he shall accomplish as an hireling
his day.*

JOB having pleaded for pity upon consideration of the weaknesse and frailty of man, upon the consideration of the shortnesse of his life, and sinfulness of his nature, proceeds here to another argument from a double consideration about death.

First, Because death hath a set and a fixed time at which it will come, and will not tarry, in the 5th and 6th verses.

Secondly, Because there is no returning from death: when death hath got us into its hand, it holdeth us fast and keepeth us sure enough. This he illustrates two ways,

1. By a dissimilitude, in the 7, 8, 9, 10. verses, *There is hope of a tree if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, &c.* but it is not so with man: *Man dieth and wasteth away, Man giveth up the Ghost, and where is he?* This is a dissimilitude.

2. He illustrateth it by a similitude, vers. 11, 12. *As the waters fail from the sea, and the floud decayeth and dryeth up, so man lieth down and riseth not.* By these two are set forth the prevailing strength of death. When once we are under the power of the grave, there is no release nor fetching us back by any created strength.

In these two verses, the 5th and 6th Job openeth his first argument, that there is a set time, and not onely a set time, but a time irrevocable, a time so set that there can be no unsettling of it, *The number of his months are with thee, thou hast set him his bounds, which he cannot passe.*

His days are determined.

The Argument stands thus,

He should be mercifully and gently dealt with in this life, whose life is set out by certain bounds and limits, beyond which he

E e e e 2

cannot

cannot passe, and from which he cannot return.

But thus it is with poor man, there is a set period of his life, and as he cannot get beyond it, so he cannot come back from it.

Therefore turn away and let me have some rest. As if he had said, Besides, that this life is full of evil (as was shewed before) death the greatest of natural evils is at hand, which suddenly takes us away, throweth us into the grave, hides us there without possibility of returning to such a life as we here enjoy. Job hath used this argument before: neither should it seem strange that he now repeats and modestly objects it unto God to move pity, and stir the bowels of his compassion towards him. The Psalmist, whether David or some other pen-man, argues thus (Psal. 89.48) Remember Lord how short my time is, wherefore hast thou made all men in vain? What man is he that liveth and shall not see death, and shall he deliver his soul from the power of the grave? He urgeth the Lord to grant some ease, some breathing, some respite and relaxation in this life, because death cannot be far off, from which there is no rescue, no returning,

חָרַצ *movit a-* The word which we translate *determined*, signifies properly to dig, and by a Metaphor to make an exact and curious search, or by searching thoughts to dig down into the depth of a business, and then to settle it. Hence it is translated *diligent*, (Prov. 10. 4.) *The hand of the diligent maketh rich; properly the hand of the digger makes rich.* And the word imports not only digging in the ground for ordinary commodities, as for stones, or coals, but digging for gold and silver, for the most precious metals or minerals; how diligent are men when they dig for such treasure and for riches? such is the diligent hand which maketh rich. Now because when we make any serious determination upon any matter before us, we first search or dig into the bottome of it: Therefore the word is translated here to *determine*. 'Tis so also Isa. 10. 23, *The Lord God of hosts hath made a consumption, even determined in the midst of all the land.* God makes many consumptions, he lays whole countries and kingdoms waste; but his are not consumptions at a venture, or by hap hazard, accidental consumptions, but consumptions determined, that is, the Lord sets down directly who and how many, where and when, what persons, what places, what estates and things shall be consumed; God makes a determined consumption in the greatest confusions and hurry of the nations. When we

we think nothing is done wisely, all is done wisely. And that which crosseth the revealed, fulfills the secret will of God. The most disorderly consumptions (to us) are determined and ordered by God.

As this word [*determined*] is applyed to the days of man, it hath a twofold signification.

First, It notes that the days of man are reduced by God to a certain number.

Secondly, That they are reduced to so short a number, so some translate, *Are not the days of man short or few?* and the Septuagint yet closer: *Is not the life of man upon the earth one day?* as if all our life were contracted into one single day, or determined into the narrowest compasse.

Yet I conceive (though the Original may bear it) this latter sense is not so suitable to this place ; *Job* told us at the beginning of the chapter, that the days of man are few upon the earth ; And 'tis not probable that he would touch upon the same string twice in so narrow a compasse.

So then, This determination of our days refers to a certain number or measure of our dayes. Which exposition as it keeps a difference in the words, so it doth much illustrate the minde of Job. who in this discourse endeavours by various arguments to set forth the misery and weaknesse of man, and to plead with God upon that account for pity and sparing mercy. This interpretation falls in joint also with the next clause of the verse, about which I shall adde a word before I give the point.

The number of his moneths are with thee.

That is, In thy power, under thy establishment, or in thy knowledge, so we render this phrase (*chap. 10. 7.*) *Thou knowest that I am not wicked*, the Hebrew is, *It is with thee that I am not wicked*, so, *thou number of his moneths are with thee*, that is, they are plain before thine eye, and established in thy counsel.

Observe first, into what small portions he distributes the life of man, dayes and moneths, *His dayes are determined, and the number of his moneths are with thee.* God hath a distinct knowledge of every particular time of mans life, and digesteth it into the smallest divisions: he knoweth not only those more remarkable sta-

*Dies hominis
dicuntur de-
finiti ad men-
suram cer-
tam & an-
gustam.*

*Dies breves
hominis sunt
Vul.*

Εάν ἡ μία ἡ-
μέρα ὁ βίος
αὐτῆ ὅτι τῆς
γῆς.

חרצ *ide quod*
התן Rab.
Dav.

Apud nos
numerum il-
lorum esse
dicimus quo-
rum nume-
rus a nobis
stabilitur.

Aquin.

ges of infancy, of childhood, of youth, of full age, and old age, but the months and dayes of our lives: yea, his knowledge reacheth unto (which to us are almost indiscernable) hours, minutes and moments, even these are measured, numbred, cast up by the infinite foreknowledge of the eternal God.

Secondly observe,

The days and months of mans life are set and fixed.

There is a resolve passed upon every man, our times are not now to be disposed of: God hath past the account of time from all eternity. As to every thing there is a season (*Eccl. 3. 1.*) so to every person: and this is true not onely of single persons, but even of whole generations, yea of all the generations of mankinde (*Act. 17. 26.*) *He hath made of one bloud, all nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed.* God hath determined not only how long man shall live, but how long the world shall live; he said of mankinde before the flood, *his days shall be an 120 years*, *Gen. 6. 3.* He told *Abraham*, his seed should be a stranger four hundred years. He told the Jews their captivity should continue seventy years in literal *Babylon*. And he hath told us (if we could read the figures) how many years the Church of the Gospel should groan under mystical *Babylon*. *All things and persons on earth are dated in heaven. Whatsoever man is Lord of, I am sure he is not Lord of time*; he cannot dispose of one minute for himself or others. We live not at our own pleasure, nor at the pleasure of any creature, God keeps reckoning for us. The very hairs of our head are numbred, then surely the days of our lives are numbred. The hairs of the head are the meanest parts, indeed but an excrement of man, and there are such multitudes, such numbers of hair upon the head, that it is a wonder they should be numbred, or any account kept of them: yet to shew the providence of God extending to the least things, it extends to the numbring of hairs and days.

Now if God hath determined the dayes of mans life, then enquire not of the stars or of star-gazers for the number of them. When *David* would know the number of his days, he doth not resort to Astrologers, but to God; *Lord teach me to number my days*, he puts that request to God; nor did he put it to God as enquiring for the precise number of his days, (about this we must not be curious, as to know whether we shall live 20. or 30. whether

whether 70. or 80. years, such numbers are not to be searched after. It is not for us to know these times and seasons, God keeps them in his own hand: *David* I say, did not trouble himself (or God about this) but he prayed *that God would teach him that holy skill to number his days, that he might apply his heart unto wisdom; considering he had but little time, he would be instructed how to improve and use it well.*

I shall open the last branch of the verse, and then adde somewhat further by way of Observation.

As *Job* acknowledgeth that our dayes are determined, and that the number of our months is with God, so he concludes that this determination is unalterable and indispensable.

Thou hast appointed him his bounds which he cannot passe.

תָּוַעְתְּ לָהּ

Statuta fe-

cisti Statuta

enim & de-

creta Dei de-

hominis vita

sunt velut

cancelli intra

quos homo

continetur

& sunt certi

fines quos u-

tra citraque

nequit consis-

tere vita

Merc.

It is usual with men to doe and undoe, to resolve and rescind their resolutions: but the determination of God shall stand. He saith and may say it, *What I have written I have written. There are no rasures in the records of heaven: Thou hast appointed him his bounds which he cannot passe; The Hebrew is, Thou hast made him a Statute, thou hast made him a Law: we rightly translate law by bounds, for laws are the bounds of mens actions, men would be boundless and keep within no compasse, if there were no laws to rule and order them; God gave a law to bound all men, & men make laws to bound such as are under them. And as God gives us a law to bound our lives in morality, so he gives a bound or a law to our lives in nature; and as the way of mans life is set out by a Law, so also is his end or death. The Apostle speaks very sutablely to this expression (Heb. 9. 27.) It is appointed (or made as a statute or law) to all men once to die. There is a law, or statute passed that man must die: and there is a law, or a statute passed how long man shall live, or when he must die, and that law of death is irrepealable. When the Apostle saith, it is appointed to man once to die, (as we translate,) The word *once* is not to be referred to *die*, as if there were some suspicion that man could die twice (when the Apostle *Jude* speaks of some that are twice dead in spirituals, he means only they are *thoroughly dead*) But *once* is referred to *appointed*, it was *once* appointed, and that *once* shall stand, there shall never be any altering or renewing of the statute; there's no need to make a*

Iterato pre-
cepto opus non
est.

new.

new law upon the point, God hath *once* settled it, and it is settled for ever; When *Abishai* went to the cave where *Saul* was, and asked *David* leave to kill him, *I will smite him* (saith he) *but once, and I will not smite the him the second time*, I will make sure work at a blow (1 Sam. 26. 8.) such is the intendment of the particule *once* in that Law: The Lord hath appointed the bounds of life *once*, and the bounds of death *once*; he will not appoint them a second time. *Thou hast set him his bounds which he cannot passe.*

There are two opinions about the bound of mans life, or what this bound is. First, some place it in natural causes, as in the temperment and constitution of the body. There is a truth in that, but we must not rest there: Natural causes are somewhat, and men who live long are usually of a lasting complexion and constitution. But secondly, the true bounds are set by God; *The will of God is the limit of mans life*; for though there be a futableness in the natural temper of men to such or such a term of life, yet God often acts beside and crosseth that; some healthy men die young, and some crazy men live till they are old. The bounds may be passed which our natural complexion sets, the bounds cannot be passed which the providence and will of God sets: That man dies at such a time, may be a contingency in reference to second causes, but let him die when he will, it is necessary in regard of the first cause. *He cannot passe.*

The word *passe*, is proper to laws and bounds; bounds are set on purpose to keep us from *passing* beyond them. As all good laws are bounds which we should not *passe*, so *transgression* which is the breach of some law, signifies a passing over or beyond the law. God hath set man a bound or a law, how long he shall live, as well as a law in what manner he shall live. The former bound is passed by man every day, the later was never passed by any man. We often *passe* the bounds of the mortall law of God, but we cannot *passe* the bounds of the eternal decree of God.

Hence Observe,

That as the dayes of man are determined by God, so man cannot live a day beyond that determination.

Friends cannot protract, enemies cannot shorten the life of man one moment. How often did the Jews design the death of Christ

Impossibile est hominem diutius vel minus vivere quam divina dispositio habet, licet hunc hominem nunc prius mori sit contingens, si in se consideretur.
 Aquin.
 Verbum praterendi recte quadrat legi & statuto.

Christ, but they could not accomplish it, till his *hour was come*. And when his hour was come, he would not passe it. What was said of Christ is true of every man, he lives not after, nor dies before his hour is come. Man is apt to think himself Master of his own life, if not to continue it, yet to end it: And we have a saying (which some count a subtle and a wise one) *He that cares not for his own life, is master of anothers mans life*: But both speak false Doctrine, and are confuted by *Jobs* Divinity. What God speaks of that Law which is the rule of our lives in Grace, (*Matth. 5. 18.*) *Till Heaven and Earth pass, one jot or tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law, till all be fulfilled*: The same may we speak of this Law, which is the limit of our lives in Nature, one jot or tittle of this Law shall not passe unfulfilled, and when once this Law is fulfilled, the life of man cannot passe on jot or tittle further.

Some Scriptures seem to speak against *Jobs* Doctrine of the certain determination of mans dayes by the Decree of God. I shall briefly clear them.

First, When *Hezekiah* was sick, and (as he thought) dying, did not God send him a Message by the Prophet *Isaiah*, (*2 Kings 20. 5.*) *Turn again and tell the Captain of my People, thus saith the Lord, the God of David thy Father, &c. I will heal thee, and (not only so, but) I will add to thy life fifteen years*. If fifteen years were added, then surely his dayes were not determined: Either God had not appointed him a set time, or he changed his mind and came to a new appointment: And *Hezekiah* did either passe the bounds which God once fixed, or he might have fallen short of them.

I answer,

The fifteen years added to *Hezekiahs* life, were added to *Hezekiahs* date, not to Gods. *Hezekiah* looked upon himself as a dead man: He was sick, and sick to death in his own opinion, possibly also in the opinion of all his Servants and Physitians, yet he, and they too were deceived; God had determined him a longer time, and tells him he had, *Thou shalt live yet fifteen years*: This addition doth not imply any alteration in the purpose of God, as if having once decreed that *Hezekiah* should live but fourty years, he afterwards (upon his Prayer) granted that he should live fifty five: For as he determined *Hezekiah* should be sick unto Death, and that he should receive sentence of Death in

F f f f

himself,

himself, so he determined also, that *Hezekiah* should recover and out live that dangerous sicknesse fifteen years.

Secondly, That of the Preacher may be objected (*Eccles. 7. 16, 17.*) *Be not righteous overmuch, neither make thy self over-wise; why shouldest thou destroy thy self? Be not over much wicked, neither be thou foolish, why shouldest thou die before thy time?*

I answer,

He that dies before his time, dies not before the time which God hath determined. An unseasonable death to man doth not prevent Gods season. To clear which we must distinguish about death, which is twofold; first, natural, secondly, violent: A man that dieth a violent death, is said to die before his time, because he dieth before that time which he might have reached according to the course of nature: sin cuts man off before nature cuts him off, but then God cuts him off for his sin. Thus many die before their time; and, except in that sense, no man dieth before his time. That, such was the meaning of *Solomon*, is plain in the text, when he saith, *be not wicked over much?* Which (by the way) doth not imply that there is a mean in wickednesse, or that the Preacher would perswade men only to a temper in wickednesse; be wicked so far but no further; all wickednesse is too much or more then enough, *Every mean in sinning is an extream.* But when he saith *be not over much wicked*, he intends only thus much, give not thy self up to wickednesse, lest the Magistrate (who bears not the sword in vain) call thee to an account, and send thee to the grave by the hand of justice, before old age or sicknesse send thee thither. The Hebrew is, *Wherefore shouldest thou die in a time not thine?* that is, before thine old age, for that is mans proper time of dying. Again, The proper time of mans dying is, when he is ready for death: As when a Steward is ready to make his account, then is his best time to give up his Stewardship; and therefore be not wicked over much lest God take thee away when thy accounts are altogether unready, that's no time for thee to die in. There is a time of him that dieth, and a time of death; the time of death is whensoever a man dieth, but the time of him that dieth is only then, when he is fit to die.

Thirdly, Some may object the promise which is added to the fifth commandment, *Honour thy father and mother that thy days may*

may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee (Exod. 20. 12.) which carries this threat in it; if thou dishonour thy father and mother, they daies shall be shortned: Whence it may be argued, that, the shortning or lengthning of mans daies depends upon his own actings, upon his obedience or disobedience, not upon the sentence and decree of God: for if a mans life cannot be lengthned beyond its set time, where lieth the motive or strength of this argument?

I answer,

This explicit promise of lengthening, and implicit threat of shortning our dayes, doth not enforce a mutability in the appointment of God about the date of our dayes; but only holds forth a token or an evidence who they are to whom God hath appointed many dayes. Such as are obedient to parents, may with warrant look upon themselves as designed by God to long life: and they who are rebellious against their parents, have a witnesse against themselves, that God hath allotted them but a short life, or will cut them off shortly by death. For (as Solomon speaks) *The Ravens of the vallies shall pluck out the eyes of such and eat them*, that is, they shall die ignominiously and their carcasses shall become meat for the fowls of the air. Our obedience or disobedience to the revealed will of God, doth not make any change of, but fulfils and draws out the secret will of God.

Fourthly, Saith not David (Psal. 55. 23.) that, *The bloud-thirsty and deceitful man shall not live out half his days*: And again, (Psal. 89. 45.) *The dayes of our youth hast thou shortned*: If our dayes may be halved and shortned, then our dayes are not unalterably bounded and determined.

I answer,

There is a twofold limit of mans daies; there is a general limit, and there is a special or personal limit, The general limit, is threescore and ten or fourscore years (Psal. 90. 10.) (Those few exceptions which some have made by exceeding this limit, do not weaken this general rule.) But besides this general, there is a particular limit upon every person. The limit of one may be threescore years, when another is limited to forty, a third to twenty, a fourth to five, and a fifth to four: &c. These are special limits upon special men; now when the Psalmist saith, that *a deceitful man shall not live out half his daies*, the

mea ing of it is, he shall not live out half the dayes of mans general limit, as suppose a bloody man be cut off at thirty, he hath not lived out half Seventy or Eighty Years, which are the common bounds of Life prescribed to Mankind beyond which they cannot pass; But this man lives out all the dayes of his special limit, or all the dayes which were determined for his Portion in the Land of the Living. Thus the bloodiest and most deceitful Wretch that ever was in the World lives out all his dayes. Our dayes are as many as God appoints in special and no more, whensoever or in what way soever we are brought to the Period of our dayes.

From the whole Context observe by way of Corollary.

First, *The Decrees of God are absolute and irrevocable.*

As we cannot add one Cubit to our Stature, so not one hour to our dayes. And such as the Statute or Decree of God is concerning the number of dayes which every Person shall pass in this Temporal life, such also is the Decree of God concerning the number of those Persons who shall inherit Eternal Life. The dayes of Mortality are determined for every Person, how many they shall be; And it is determined who and how many Persons shall enjoy a blessed Eternity.

Secondly, Observe,

The absoluteness and irrevocability of Gods Decrees concerning the number of our dayes, doth not disingage us from the use of means, and second helps for the continuance and lengthening of our dayes.

Man must not say, God hath decreed how long I shall live, therefore I need not take any care of my life; this were to resist the Command of God, while we think we submit to his Decree: Whereas indeed all the Commands of God are subordinate and Ministerial to the fulfilling of his Decrees. Will any man say, God hath determined my dayes, which I cannot pass, therefore when I am hungry I will not eat, when I am sick I will not take Physick nor use Medicines. The Decree of God is so far from calling us off from, that it obligeth us to the use of all due means for our Preservation. When Satan tempted Christ to throw himself down from the Pinack of the Temple, he answers, *Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.* While we neglect our selves we tempt God: We must not throw away our lives, because God keeps them. *Jacob* had assurance of his life, by a special promise,

*Hominum
excusationes
sunt Dei
tentationes.*

yet

yet when *Eſau* came out againſt him with four hundred men, he doth not ſay, *Lord, thou haſt undertaken for my protection, what need I trouble myſelf?* I will ſit down under that Banner of thy promiſes and providence, which thou haſt diſplaid over me, let *Eſau* rage and threaten, let him muſter and lead all his force againſt me if he will, what care I? I fear him not, he muſt break through the truth of God before he breaks in upon me; the Word of God muſt fall before I fall: I am under the charge of Heaven. Doth *Jacob* make this uſe of the Promiſe? No, he falls a praying like a Saint, and he falls a providing for his Defence like a Souldier (*Gen. 32.*) Had not *David* a ſure word from God, that he ſhould live to wear the Crown of *Iſrael* and *Judah*? Yea, he had not only a word but a ſign, he was anointed by *Samuel*, which Ceremony aſſured him he ſhould be King, yet how doth he improve all Aids and Friends to ſave his life: He doth not ſay, *Samuel hath told me from the Lord, that I ſhall be King, therefore I will not ſtir a foot from Saul, let him do his worſt*: No, he withdraws from Court, and gathers an Army; he defends himſelf by power, he doth not ſtand to the naked defence of the Promiſe. And if it be our duty to labour after the preſervation of a Temporal life, though God hath decreed the bounds of it, then much more ſhould we do thus in reference to Spiritual and Eternal life. Some will ſay, God hath made a Decree which cannot paſs, who ſhall be ſaved and who damned, therefore what need we uſe the means of Salvation? What need we avoid the ways of damnation? But remember, the ſame word commands us to depart from iniquity, which ſaith, *The foundation of God ſtandeth ſure, and he knoweth who are his.* 'Tis as much our duty to give all diligence to make our Calling and Election ſure, as it is to believe that the Election and Calling of God are ſure.

Thirdly, Obſerve, If our dayes are determined by God, then we ſhould not be afraid (when we have a due call) of ſhortening our dayes, by running hazards and hard adventures for God.

Our life is in Gods hand, he hath ſet the bounds, which no mans malice can ſhorten, nor any cowardice of our own lengthen. As none could bring us into the World, ſo none can thruſt us out, till the time appointed. Let not Perſecutors take away the Truth from us, which God hath given us to believe, for they cannot take away a day from us, which God hath given us to live.

This is an excellent ground of courage, but no ground of carelessness: Were we perswaded of this truth, it would ease us of much inordinate fear, though it should not at all abate our orderly care of this present life. *Paul was in deaths often but he died not once, till his day came. Paul was in the Lions mouth but the Lion could not eat him, because he was not then meat for death.*

Lastly, *God is most exact to his own numbers.*

As he is exact concernig duties by him commanded to require them, so he is exact concerning daies by him appointed, that we may enjoy them. *My Spirit (saith the Lord) shall not always strive with man, his dayes shall be an hundred and twenty years (Gen. 6. 5.)* The floud came not upon the old world an hour before this number of years was run out, and the old world could not passe that number of years an hour, the deluge comes, and all are drowned. The Lord foretold Abraham (as wastoucht before) *Gen. 15. 13. Thy seed shall be a stranger in a land which is not theirs, they shall serve them and they shall afflict them four hundred years (beginning the account at the birth of Isaac)* The fulfilling of which prophesie is reported in the holy story (*Exod. 12. 40.*) *It came to passe at the end of the four hundred and thirty years (beginning the account from the day in which the promise was made to Abraham) the self same day it came to passe that all the host of the Lord went out of the Land of Egypt.* God did not only not fail them a day, but he did not fail them a piece of a day; for they came out in the night, because the four hundred and thirty years were expired that night, and when the time was out, though it were night, God would not stay till morning or break of day: he would rather provide them a Torch, an extraordinary night-light (then stay for day-light) that so his word might be fullfilled in its perfect season. The *Babylonish* captivity continued seventy years and no longer. And some give that for the reason why *Belshazzar* was slain in the night because then the years of that captivity were expired. The collation of times proves it, that *Daniels weeks* were fullfilled to a day at the death of Christ. God the great disposer of time and numberer of days, hath also calculated all the times of the Churches troubles and deliverances, in the book of the *Revelation*: and there the dayes of *Babylon* are determined, and her bounds are set which she shall not passe. We have a saying, much like our selves,

selves, *A day breaks no square*: but it is not so with God, he keeps time with us to an hour. All the visions of God are (as the Prophet *Habakkuk* speaks of that vision chap. 2. 3.) for an appointed time, but at the end they shall speak, they shall not lie, though they tarry, wait for them, because they will surely come they will not tarry. The visions of God do tarry sometimes beyond our time, but they never tarry beyond Gods time. He hath set a bound to all the affairs and states on earth, which they cannot passe.

Job having thus asserted the certainty and irrevokability of Gods decree about the dayes of man, grounds an earnest petition upon it in the next verse,

Verse 6. *Turn from him that he may rest, till he shall accomplish as a hireling his dayes.*

But is this a good petition? Doth *Job* pray in faith or according to knowledge, when he prayeth the Lord to turn from him? Is not the presence of God most pretious and desireable? Is not the departure of God the saddest affliction of man? why then doth he desire the Lord to turn away, seeing it is our happinesse to have God near us.

I answer,

God may be said to turn away from man in two respects, First, In displeasure, when he ceaseth to do us good. Secondly, In favour, when he forbearth to lay any further evil upon us, it is this latter turning away which *Job* praies for.

Yet some interpret him in the first sense, *turn away*, that is, withdraw thy presence from me, even thy supporting and strengthening presence, which while it remains with me I cannot die, there fore withdraw it, and let me die, let me go to rest, until I may expect at the resurrection my reward, even as a Hireling doth his wages for his days work,

There is a threefold truth in this exposition, yet I cannot give it as the truth of this text.

First, It is a truth that the presence of God is the support of our lives, if he do but turn away we quickly die, and return unto our dust. The damned would die, but God will not turn away from them, his angry presence is with them to hold their souls in life, that so both soul and body might be held in pain. The

*antea an
auris. Sep.*

Discede ne

*tua presen-
tia conserves*

me, meque

*morti per-
mitte. Aquin*

Abfiste ab eo

ut desirat

cum jam gra-

to animo ex-

ciptet diem

fatatem tan-

quam merce-

narius. Ty-

The gur.

The Elect must die if God should turn away from them; his favourable presence holds their souls in life, and will hold both their Souls and Bodies together in joy for ever. As the rising of the Sun is the cause of the Day, and when the Sun departs and turns away, Darknesse covers the Face of the Earth, so the presence of God is the support of our lives, and when God departs and turns away, Death covers our Faces in the Earth.

Secondly, 'Tis true, *Death is a Rest*, Death is not only (like sleep) the Parenthesis of our Labours, but the full stop and period of our Labours: There's no work in the Grave.

Thirdly, 'Tis a truth that, *The Toils, Troubles, and evils of this life make Death desirable*. 'Tis best to desire to die, that we may enjoy Christ and God, who are the chiefest good, yet the fear or feeling of evil cause most to desire Death. It is some mercy to die before times of Judgment, and it is a mercy to die in times of Judgment, (Rev. 14. 13.) *I heard a Voice from Heaven saying to me, write, Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, from henceforth, yea saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their Labours*: Some lay the Emphasis upon those words, *from henceforth*: John was Prophecying of Troubles and Persecutions to come upon the Church of God. Now, the Spirit saith, *Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, from henceforth*: As if he had said, The time I am Prophecying of, will be so full of labour and trouble, that even they who live in the Lord, may account it their blessednesse to die then, as well as it is their blessednesse to die at any time in the Lord.

*Ne me tam
accurat &
attente ob-
servas, q. d.
simulate non
videre.*

But I passe this Exposition. The words hold out rather a Deprication of, then a Prayer for Death; take it thus: Job having said to God, at the 3d. Verse, *Wilt thou open thy eye upon such an one?* Here intreats God to turn from him: As if he had said, *Be not so strict in marking who I am, or what I have done*; he speaks after the manner of men, who turn away from those whom they intend to spare; if a Father would not correct his Child who hath offended him, he turns away, that he may avoid the Temptation, or Provocation of doing it. Thus Job intreats the favour of God, or the forbearance of his Anger, *turn away from me*, let me be quiet a while, let me have some peaceable dayes in the World, before I depart the world.

Turn

Turn from him that he may rest.

The word signifies to Cease or give over Action (Ezek. 3. 2.) *לִמְנוּחָיו* Signi-
He that heareth let him hear, and he that forbeareth let him forbear. *ficat finire*
(Gen. 41. 2.) Joseph took account of the Corn till there was so *& quiescere*,
much that he left numbring, he numbred no more. God is said to *five cessare*
cease from the work of Creation, because he rested from that kind *ab actione*.
of Action, he Created no more. Here, *Let me rest*, is, let me *Ut cesset se*
have a Cessation from Sufferings, let me be Afflicted no more. *hec plaga vel*

Others read, *Let me alone that it may rest*; that is, let the afflictio.
Affliction rest: So he prayed (which may expound this place) at Chal. Mer.
the tenth chapter, vers. 20, 21. *Are not my dayes few, cease then and Non vitam*
let me alone, that I may take comfort a little: As if he had said, *longiorem*
Forbear, let this poor man alone. *precatur sed*

Till he shall accomplish as a Hireling his dayes. *pene relaxa-*

That the dayes of man are like the dayes of an Hireling, *was tionem.*
shewed (Chap. 7. 1.) I shall now only open the accomplishment *יְמֵי*
of his day. *Verbum* *לְמַעַן*

The word which we translate *accomplish*, signifies properly to *Significat*
desire and will with great delight, and by a Metaphor to *accom-*
plish, because we labour earnestly to accomplish that, which we *vehementer*
greatly desire and delight in. So here, *till he shall accomplish* with *lectari re a-*
delight, with willingness his day, or bring his life to that longed *liqua.*
for end, as a Hireling his day, so some render, *Till the hour or Metaphorice*
time comes, which is so much desired: That is, (saith the Glosse) *compleve ve-*
till I am as willing to die, as a Labouring man is to go to Supper *lut leto ani-*
and to Bed. A Hireling is put to hard Labour, yet he comforts *mo, res si-*
himself that Evening will come, and then he shall have both rest *nem velut*
and wages: Let me alone, *That I may accomplish as a Hireling optare viden-*
(who is hard wrought) *my day*: That's pleasing to him, and so *tur & gra-*
would this be to me. Again, *The dayes of an Hireling*, notes a *rum habere*
time set out to a special Business: As the *dayes of a man* note the *quasi eo pro-*
whole time of our Pilgrimage here on Earth: And then his mean- *pendeant.*
ing is, let me rest, till I have finished the work for which I came *Merc.*
into the World; let me not depart without my Errand. One of

the Ancients finds it thus in some Copies, *Turn from me that Donec optata*
I may rest and refresh my life as a Hireling, who hath breathings veniet. Vulg.
and times of intermission granted him from his Labour. But surely Hebraiz an-
Jobum hic petere, ut tam diu permitatur vivere, quo usque ipse sponte sua senio iam
confectus optet mortem, i. e. donec sponte mariatur. Chrysostom.

Job intends here a Period, not a pause of his labours.

Hence Observe,

First, *The life of man is a labourious life.*

He must accomplish his dayes as a Hireling: He is a Labourer, not a Loiterer. Sin brought pain into our Labour, but the duty of Labour was before Sin.

Secondly Note,

We have but a day of Labour.

A Hireling doth not think much of it, it is but a day, and if some have a longer day then others, yet still 'tis but a day: This day will end, and it will be as if it had never begun, we shall forget all our sorrows. A woman in Travel hath great sorrow, but when the work is over, she forgets all her sorrow, for joy that a man is born into the World: When we come to the wished accomplishment of our Labours, we shall forget that we were in labour. As our Labours are little regarded by the World here, so we shall as little remember them our selves hereafter, we shall lay them all under our Pillows, when we go to the Grave, and talk no more of them.

Thirdly Note,

This life must be accounted for, or, there is a reckoning to come about this life.

Every man accomplisheth as a Hireling his day; a Hireling hath his work viewed before his Wages are paid: *Every man must give an account of himself to God.* Evil workers shall be paid with Death: They who do good shall receive the Free gift of Eternal life: Our labour shall not be in vain, either in the Lord or out of the Lord; all that we do shall be considered: Wicked men shall have their pay for what they have done, and the Saints shall receive their reward; *Their works shall follow them:* They shall not receive Wages for their Work, but they shall receive benefit by their work, worth more then their Work Ten Thousand times told. Though Saints are not mercenary (they work, not as Hirelings for Pay) yet in the issue they shall have better then Pay for all their Works. They shall receive more for the least work, then the best works can deserve. A Cup of cold Water shall have a reward, Rivers of Oyl have no Merit. It were not worth while to be as an Hireling, or to set our Hand to the Noblest Works among men, if all the return were to come through the Hands of Men: But as whatsoever we do

do in this World is in the sight of God, so it is also in the Memory of God. For, *He is not unrighteous to forget our work and labour of Love* (Heb. 6. 10.) Both the Labour of our Callings, and the Labour of our Sufferings shall have a full reward.

JOB Chap. 14. Vers. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.

For there is hope of a Tree if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender Branch thereof will not cease.

Though the Root thereof wax old in the Earth, and the Stock thereof die in the Ground:

Yet through the sent of Water it will bud, and bring forth Boughs like a Plant.

But man dieth and wasteth away; yea, a man giveth up the Ghost, and where is he?

As the Waters fail from the Sea, and the Floud decayeth and drieth up:

So man lieth down and riseth not; till the Heavens be no more they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their Sleep.

IN these six Verses, Job amplifies and illustrates his former assertion, that, *The days of man are determined, and the number of his months, which he cannot pass: He doth this, 1. By a Dissimilitude. 2. By a Similitude.*

The Dissimilitude, is laid down in the 7, 8, 9, 10. verses: We have the Explication, in the 7, 8, and 9th. verses, and the Application of it, at the 10th. *There is hope of a Tree if it be cut down, &c. Ver. 7. But man dieth and wasteth away, yea man gives up the Ghost, and where is he? Ver. 10.*

The Similitude is contained in the 11th and 12th verses, *As the Waters fail from the Sea, &c. So man lieth down and riseth not, till the Heavens be no more.*

Verse 7. *For there is hope of a Tree if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease.*

The general subject of this Context, is the same with the former, which hath also been insisted upon from other passages in this Book; namely, that man dying, returns not from death in this World: So that (here being no new matter) my chief businessse will be to explain the terms, and clear the parts of this Dissimilitude;

There is hope of a Tree.

Quia est arbori spes.
Pagn.

q. d. Arbor habet naturalem aptitudinem ut reparetur.

Augustinus docet hec verba continere in se vim similitudinis & exponi debere per ironiam q. d. scilicet homo non resurget cum videatur resurgere arbor Sic etiam Lyranus apud Merc.

Or, *A Tree hath hope*, so the Letter of the Hebrew, and so it is rendered by learned Interpreters, ascribing that to a Tree which is proper to a man, hope: That which hath no reason cannot have any hope, nor doth the Hebraism intend any more then our reading: To say, *a Tree hath hope*, is only this, *man hath hope of a Tree*, or, *there is hope of a Tree*. A Tree hath a natural aptitude to sprout up after it is cut down, and therefore man hopes it will. There are three Opinions concerning the scope of these Words.

First, Some conceive Job expressing his hope of the Resurrection by this comparison: And then the words are a Similitude, not a Dissimilitude: As a Tree cut down sprouts again, so, though man be cut down by Death, yet he shall revive and rise again. What the Prophet speaks of the restoring of the People of God the Jews from the grave of their civil death (their Captivity in Babylon) is as true of the restoring of all the People of God from the Grave of a natural death. *Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they rise, awake and sing ye that dwell in the Dust, for thy dew is as the dew of Herbs, and the Earth shall cast out her dead,* Isa. 26. 19. In pursuance of which Exposition, the Question at the Close of the 10th. Verse, *and where is he?* Is read with an Admiration, which gives the Sense thus: Doth the Tree grow when cut down? And doth man die, waste away, give up the Ghost? And, *Is he no where?* What? Is he no where? That's incredible: Man is somewhere when he is not here, and in due time it will appear where he is. Some of the Ancients expound the words as a holy Triumph over, or Scorn of Death, as if he had said, *What? shall senseless Trees and Shrubs grow up again?* and

and shall not man the noblest of the Creatures? Is this good Reason or good Divinity, that Trees shall rise and men shall not? The Scripture by the reviving of a dying Creature, sets forth the Resurrection of man after Death, (1 Cor. 15. 36.) *Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickned except it die.* The seed dieth and then groweth, there is an Argument from Nature, a Tree may die, and yet grow, there is an Argument from Nature. The Resurrection of the dead is an Article of Faith, and yet our Eyes may shew us an Argument of it in Nature. We may see a Resurrection in the annual reviving of a Tree, the Tree in the Winter casts its leaves, and looks as dead, but when the Sun returns, and with that the heat, the Tree reviveth; every spring is as a Resurrection from death. There is a truth in this Interpretation, but to make out such an Irony by the grammer of the words, or such an Inference from the scope of the Text is very hard, if at all possible: And therefore I lay it by.

Secondly, Others interpret *Job* bemoaning the condition of man (as to this point) inferiour to that of Trees. For first, the boughs of a Tree may be lopt, yea the body of it quite cut down, and yet it feels no pain; the Tree is not grieved how much soever you hew, cut, and mangle it: But when God layes his Ax either to the boughs of mans by Sicknes, Diseases, and outward Afflictions, or to his Root by death, man feels pain: Every stroak puts him to smart. Secondly, As the Tree is cut and cut down without pain, so it will sprout up again, and renew, which man doth not.

Hence Note,

That a man in extreame affliction thinks any condition better then his own.

Job seems to envy the happiness of a Tree. How long will the thoughts of man descend when he is laid low? He would even change states or (as we say) turn Tables with stones and shrubs. There is hope of a Tree, but I am (as to a Temporel restoring) past hope.

Thirdly, The Words carry an Argument to move the Lord to spare *Job*, or not to cut him down, though he had beaten off his Leaves and Fruit (his substance being swept away by Robbers), though he had lopt off his Boughs and Branches (his Children being swept away by Death) yet he desires that he would not press upon his Person also, and cut him quite down, because

G g g g 3

then

Soles occide- then he should be lost for ever out of this World. He was not
re & redie like a Tree, which when cut down shouts forth at the Root a-
possunt. gain. We find such Arguments used by Orators and Poets to
Nobis cum set forth the Vanity of man beyond that of other Creatures. *The*
semel occidit Sun sets (saith one of them) and riseth again. But when mans
brevis lux. sun goeth down, it riseth no more; 'tis alwayes night with man when
Nox est per- this night comes. The Snow dissolves (saith another) and then the
petua una Fields are cloathed with Grass, and the Trees with Leaves, but nei-
dormienda ther the Honour, nor the Eloquence, nor the Piety of man can restore
Catullus. him to a Spring after the Winter of his Death.

Diffagere There is hope of a Tree if cut down, that it will sprout again.
nives, rede- The word which we translate to sprout, signifieth to change,
unt jam gra- and renew to another, or a better state. Job makes use of it,
mina campis at the 14th. Verse of this Chapter, I will wait till my change, or
arboribusque my sprouting come. Though he was hopeles of a change from
come, &c. death to this life, yet he was assured of a happy change in death,
Non Tor- yea of a change from Death to Eternal Life.

quate genus But it may be doubted, how a Tree if cut down sprouts again.
non te facin- 'Tis true, when only the Boughs are lopt off, it sprouts presently,
dia non te, but if the body of a Tree be cut down, Will it grow again? That
restituet pie- seems to be the sense of Job.

tas. Hor. li. I answer.

4. Car. Od. The bodies of some Trees (as for instance the Willow) being
 7. cut down and set into the ground, are every where observed to
in proprie grow, and their tender branch doth not cease. Some interpret
mutabitur, Job not of Trees in general, but of this or some other particular
instaurabi- sort of Trees.

tur, innova- Again, Some Trees though the body which is cut off will not
tur. grow, yet the Root which remains will grow up into a new
a Quarun- body. Such a Tree is the a Laurel, whose description given by
dam arbo- Pliny in his natural History, doth well agree with this Discourse
rum radix of Job. And because the Heathen did not believe a Resurrection,
vivancior su- therefore they made those Trees to be Symbols and Emblems
perficie ut of Death, which being once cut down, grow no more: It is ob-
lauri, itaque served that the Romans were wont to place a b Cypress-Tree at
cum truncus the Threshold of the House of Death, because the Cypress being
inavit, re- cut down never springs any more.

scissa etiam

latus fructificat. Plin. Nat. Hist. b *Romani moris fuit ut potissimum cupressus qua*
excisa renasci non solet in vestibulo mortuie poneretur. Ser. in Vir. l. 4. Pl. l. 16. c. 32.

Lastly,

Laſtly, Many Trees (their Roots remaining in the Earth) will grow after cutting, though not in a full Body, yet in Sprouts, their tender Branches will not ceaſe, or as ſome render the Hebrew, *Their ſuckers will not leave*: We often ſee young Slips riſe at the Root, when the Tree it ſelf is cut down. And this I conceive to be the meaning of Job, who calls ſuch ſhoots *Suckers*, becauſe they live upon the Root, like little Children at their Mothers breaſt. Job carries on the Explication yet further.

Verſe 8. *Though the Roots thereof wax old in the Earth, and the Stock thereof die in the ground.*

In which words he puts a ſuppoſition of greater improbability. 'Tis much that a Tree cut down ſhould grow, much more if the root wax old, and the ſtock die in the ground. It ſhewed not only the Improbability but Impoſſibility (in Nature) that Sarah ſhould have a Son when ſhe was waxen old, and her Womb (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, Rom. 4.) was dead. And will the dead Root of a Tree grow naturally again? I conceive this dying of the Root is only the decaying of the Root, or that he intends only a partial not a total Death: Chriſt tells us (Job. 12. 24) *That except a corn of Wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone, (that is, it doth not increaſe or bring forth more corns) but if it die it brirgeth forth much fruit.* The death of corn in the ground is not a total death, but only a corruption or alteration of it, for if the Seminal life and Vertue of it be quite Extinguiſht or drawn out, it could not yield either Blade or Ear without a miracle; yet becauſe that alteration of it is a kind of death, therefore it is uſed as an Illuſtration of Chriſts riſing, and alſo of our, (by Paul, 1 Cor. 15.) from a total Death. Now according to the courſe which God hath ſet in Nature, a Corn of *Suavis Mæ-* Wheat (in this ſenſe) dying, bringeth forth fruit; ſo according to the courſe of Nature, the root of a tree (in this ſenſe) dying or dead buds and brings forth Boughs, as it follows in the next words.

Verſe 9. *Yet through the ſent of Water, it will bud, and bring forth Boughs like a Plant.*

It is an elegant Metaphor, as if a tree ſmelt the water as ſoon as it came near: And it notes thus much; That the tree upon the firſt ſoaking in, or ſpringing up of the Water, is reſreſhed and made fruitful. When the three Children were caſt into the fiery Furnace, 'tis ſaid, *The ſmell of fire had not paſſed upon them,* (Dan. 3. 27.)

3. 27.) that is, their garments were not so much as touched or singed with fire. The fire had not made the least Impression upon them. So 'tis said, when Sampson was bound, he broke the Cords, even as a Thread that smells the fire (*Judg. 16. 9.*) A Log will endure the fire long, but upon the first approach of fire, a thread is burnt asunder. The Prophet saith of Christ, *The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord.* (*Isa 11. 3.*) the Hebrew is, *Shall make him smell in the fear of the Lord*, or, *he shall smell in the fear of the Lord*. Smelling is put for understanding, and (because the smell is a very quick sense) it notes Freeness or Quickness of Understanding, as we render, *he shall be quick of understanding*, he shall understand the deepest Mysteries, and most difficult cases as speedily, as the most exquisite smell takes a scent. So then, when Job saith, by the scent or smell of water it will bud, it notes quick growing, or an easie bringing forth of a harvest of Boughs (as the Original imports) whereas man will not grow again by an application or use of means.

A Tree cut down springs again : But how? *Through the scent of Water.*

Hence Note,

First, *Every effect hath a cause.*

The Tree will grow, but it must have at least a smell of water.

Secondly Observe,

Natural effects have their natural causes.

Through the scent of Water it will grow : Water is as proper to preserve or draw out the life of Plants, as Bread is to preserve the life of Man.

Thirdly Observe,

Upon the presence of the cause the effect follows presently.

Through the scent of water it will grow, give it Water, and you shall soon perceive a growth. How doth this shame man! a Tree grows, sends out both leaves and fruit through the scent of water, but man hath spiritual Water, the Rain of holy Doctrine from Heaven, he hath not only the scent of Water, but abundance of Water soaking upon him, yet how little doth he grow! yea, how many are there that grow not at all? Many souls are continually Digged, Dressed, and Rained upon, who stand like old Dotards in a Forrest, not having so much as one green bough upon them : Is this to honour the means, or to honour God who gives the means?

קציר proprie
messis ut pal-
mites qui
sunt rami
vitium vo-
cantur.

קציר

Psal. 80. 12.

means. Trees answer all natural causes with futable effects, when the Sun turneth about, they put on their Green suits, they send out their Leaves, their Blossoms and their Fruits: The Sun of Righteousness shines, the warm Beams of the Gospel-light dart upon thousands of Souls, who continue in a Winter of Ignorance and Unbelief, yielding neither the pleasure of Leaves, nor the profit of Fruit. And though some bring forth Leaves, yet how few bring forth Fruit, especially Fruit meet for Repentance from dead works, or the hopes of Eternal life? We see many Spiritual helps, but how rare are Spiritual effects; The Grass and Trees of the Earth will condemn those who make no growth in Grace, though they have been often watered with the word of Grace.

Verse 10. *But man dieth and wasteth away, yea, man giveth up the Ghost, and where is he?*

The Hebrew is, *strong and powerful man dieth*; let him be as *וְיָדוֹ* *ver pot-* strong as he will, die he must, waste, and give up the Ghost: Some *tens & cla-* Observe an inversion of natural order in the words. For man *rus.* goes down the Grave by these steps. He first wastes, secondly, *Sunt qui vo-* give up the Ghost, and then dies. The Spirit of God doth *lunt hic esse* not alwayes exactly attend (*prius & posterius*) first or last, ac- *hysteron pro-* cording to the order of Nature: Neither is there any redundancy *teron.* in this plenty of words. There is not one Title in Scripture but hath its Use and Elegancy, and because the Spirit of God would shew the certainty of this thing, he heaps many words together *Ego hanc ge-* into one asseveration, man wastes, dieth, and giveth up the *minationem* Ghost, he is all things and suffers all things, which speak Mor- *ad copiam* tality. *lingua sancte*

We render, *yea, man giveth up the Ghost*, as if that implied somewhat more then the former two: The particle, *yea*, (in the Hebrew) heightens the sense, man wasteth, dieth, yea, he giveth up the Ghost. *facere puto.*

Some understand wasting and dying, but as Preparatories or Antecedents to giving up the Ghost: Man decays and wastes, yea, he dieth every day, but he doth not give up the Ghost every day, that's the last Act. *Paul* speaking of his outward troubles and persecutions saith, *I die dayly*, and in another place, *I have been in deaths often*: Natural death steals upon us part after part, it siezeth now upon the Eyes and makes them dim, then

H h h h

upon

upon the Ears and makes them Deaf, and so takes in now this Member, and anon that, till it conquer the whole man. Death hath its Forerunners and Harbingers, Sickneses and Diseases; A sick diseased man hath many Symptoms of Death upon him before he gives up the Ghost: When he gives up that all is given up, Death enters his Fort, and takes full possession of him.

And where is he?

*Ubi est?
Nullibi, ut
inde redire
possit ad ean-
dem vi-
tam quam
semel reli-
quit. Non
est, quia non
est in vivis.
Drus.*

The Question seems to carry a Negation in it, *man is no where*, He is not transplanted as Trees sometimes are, and set in another ground. But is that goodly thing, *man*, quite gone, and vanished to a nothing when he dieth? That which is no where is nothing. There must be some place for every thing: *Every entity must have its ubi, every what its where*: Therefore to say man is no where, is to say man is nothing, or to assent to a total Mortality both of Soul and Body: We must therefore restrain *where is he?* To where is he in the World? Look for him in the Country, in the City, at Home or Abroad, he is not to be had, man gives up the Ghost, and where is he?

I might here give Observations about the Mortality of Man, but having done it lately, *ver. 1, 2*. I will not do it again.

Note First, In general.

Man is a wasting, dying Creature.

He hath received a life which he must shortly render and repay.

Secondly, *When man dieth, himself and all his glory are gone, gone for ever out of this World.*

Where is he? He and his Riches, he and his Honour, he and his Wisdom, what's become of all his Designs, Devices, Counsels and Thoughts, (*Psal. 146.*) *Trust not in Princes, nor any of the Children of Men, their Breath is in their Nostrils, they die, and then all their Thoughts perish.* The things which they have contrived in or produced out of their Thoughts, those curious Fabricks of the Brain fall and die with them. So much of *Jobs* Diffimilitude.

The Similitude follows in the two next Verses, *Jobs* Discourse moves from the Root and Sprigs of a Tree, to the Seas and Waters.

Verse

Verse 11. *As the Waters fall from the Sea, and the Flood decayeth and drieth up.*

The Similitude is opened in this 11th. verse, and applied at the 12th. *So man lyeth down, and riseth not, &c.*

As the Waters fall from the Sea.

The Particle, *as*, is not in the Original, There we read, *Wa-* וַיִּשְׁכַּח וַיִּשְׁכַּח וַיִּשְׁכַּח *ters fall from the Sea, and the Floods decay and dry up, Man lyeth down and riseth not.* This hath led some Interpreters to render *Verbum de-* it (as the former) by a Dissimilitude; And they make out the *notat abire* sense thus: *The Sea ebbs and fails from the Shoar, yet it returns proficisci,* again when the Tide turns, and though the Floods decay and dry up *1 Sam. 9. 7.* through the extremity of heat, and drought, yet the Rain comes and *Dent. 32.* fills them up again, but Man (whose life is like Water spilt upon the *36.* ground, *2 Sam. 14. 14.*) is unlike the Sea, or River Water: For when he ebbs he flows not again, when his Moisture is dried up it returns to him no more.

But the stream of Interpreters conclude it a Similitude, and I shall keep to that, it being also very futable to the purpose of *Job.*

As the Waters fail from the Sea.

How do the Waters fail from the Sea? The Sea is the great Vessel or Receptacle of Waters, God calleth the *gatherin together of waters Sea,* (*Gen. 1.*) And if the Waters which are gathered together fail, what will become of the scattered Waters?

There are different Apprehensions about the making out of a clear meaning.

First thus, As Waters after an Exundation of the Sea, or of some great River are (upon the reflux of either) separated from the Channel, and left behind upon the Land, which they overflowed, and because they cannot return (for then they must ascend, which is impossible to Nature) they there utterly dry up and evapourate: So man dieth and returneth no more unto his place; As if he had said, *It is as absurd and incongruous to affirm that man shall return again to this present life, when he dieth, as to say the Sea water left upon the Land, can convey it self back into that ancient Channel.*

Secondly, Others make it an Argument of the Resurrection,

H h h h 2

As fluxit Sanct.

As if he had said, *Just as the Sea decays and dries up, so man when he dies shall be utterly lost*: One was, is, as true as the other. We have a Proverbial speech, *This is as true as the Sea burns*: We may speak to the same sense, *This is as true as the Sea is empty or dried up*.

Thirdly, This sense is given, as when the Sea fails from the place to which it hath usually flowed; and leaves its former bounds, then the Flouds and Streams adjacent dry up (because they are fed and maintained by the Sea, *Eccles. 1. 7.*) so when natural moisture decays in man (which is the supplement and Oyl of Life) man fails and can no more revive himself, then a River can recover its streams when it is cut off from those secret supplies and springs which it receiveth from the Seas: Thus the Similitude is applyed in the next verse.

Verse 12. *So man lieth down and riseth not, till the Heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep.*

שָׁכַב cubat
in pulvere
five in sepul-
chro quod
Chaldaei vo-
cant שָׁכַב
unde
שְׁכִיבִים
mortui.

As if he had said, *Death brings man to bed in the Grave, from whence he riseth not.*

Until the Heavens be no more.

What Heavens? and How are the Heavens no more? There is a threefold Heaven. First, The Airy Heaven, or all that space between the Earth and the Moon, Birds are said to fly abroad in the Heaven, that is, in the Air: Secondly, The Starry Heaven, or the Heaven where the Stars are placed, whether moveable or fixed: Thirdly, The Imperial Heaven, which is called the seat of the Blessed, or, which is more transcendent, The place of the special Presence and Residence of God, when he saith, *till the Heavens be no more*, means he the Airy, or the Starry, or the Highest Heaven? There is no question but these last Heavens shall continue for ever: Then we must Interpret him of the Starry and Airy Heavens.

Until the Heavens be no more.

Until hath a threefold signification in Scripture.

First, *Until* signifieth a certain Period or Duration: *The Scepter shall not depart from Judah until Shiloh come*, (*Gen. 49. 10.*) So, (*Rom. 11. 25.*) *Blindness in part is hapned unto Israel, until the*

the fulness of the Gentiles become in. In these and many other Texts, *Until* notes a determinate time with an exclusion or shutting out of succeeding times, or any stop till the accession and accomplishment of that time.

Secondly, *Until* notes perpetuity, (and is put for) *ever*, Psal. 110. *Sit thou at my right hand until I have made thy foes thy foot-stool.* Christ shall not sit at the right Hand of God till that time only, and then be put from his place; For, *Unto the Son he saith, Thy Throne O God, is for ever and ever*, Heb. 1. 8. Yet we must distinguish between the Substance and the Circumstance of Christs Kingdom, between the thing it self and the form or manner of Administring and dispensing it. In the former sense it is absolutely everlasting, in the latter it shall remain only until the Consummation of all things.

Thirdly, *Until* signifies as in some places, *for ever*, so in others, *never*, 2 Sam. 6. 13. *Michol had no Child until the day of her death*, that is, she never had a Child. An so *until* is most generally interpreted, (*Mat. 1. 25.*) *Then Joseph took unto him his wife, and knew her not, till she had brought forth her first born Son.* impossible That is, he never knew her, it being (though no Article of Faith, yet) a received Opinion, that *Mary was a Virgin as before, so corrupti ita ever after the Birth of Christ.* *hominem.*

When it is said here, *man shall not rise till the Heavens be no more.* Some conceive *Job* expressing one impossible thing by another, or implying that it is as impossible to Nature for man Aquin. to rise from the Grave of Corruption, as it is for the Heavens to Elegans He- corrupt. As if he had said, *Man shall never rise by Natural brasimus est power, as the Heavens shall not decay by Natural weakness.* The quando unum. Heavens have no Seed of corruption in their Constitution, as not impossibile being mixed or made up of different qualities: Hence Heaven in per aliud im- Scripture notes perpetuity. To have a Throne as the dayes of Hea- possibile de- ven, is to have a Throne for ever, (Psal. 89. 29.) And so Daniel claratur: speaks in that Prophecie of the Kingdom of Christ, (*Dan. 2. Bold.* 44.) *And in the dayes of those Kings, shall the God of Heaven set Ex cœlorum up a Kingdom, which shall never be destroyed, and the Kingdom diuturnitate shall never be left to other people:* So we render, but whereas probat quod. we joyn Heaven to God, some of the Learned joyn Heaven to nunquam Kingdom, and read it thus, *In the dayes of these Kings shall juxtanatu- God set up the Kingdom of Heaven, or, a Heavenly Kingdom, ram sit repa- that is, an everlasting Kingdom, for so he explains it, which randis homo.*

In diebus au- shall not be destroyed, in this sense the Gospel is called the king-
tem regum dome of heaven, because of the perpetuity of it: No sin of those
illorum sus- that professe it, no violence of those who oppose and persecute
citabit Deus it, shall prevail against it or totally abolish it: The Kingdome
coeli Reg- of heaven is (in this sense) above the possibility of earthly vi-
num: Ubi olence. So then, *Manslyng in the Grave till the Heavens be no*
nomen coeli, more, notes continuance in the Grave, even as long as this world
non construi- continues, or, that it shall be night with every man that dies till
tur cum no- the day of Judgment.
mine Deus Here 'tis questioned, Shall the Heavens be no more after the
sed cum no- day of Judgment? Or shall the Heavens corrupt, when man is
mine regnum raised from Corruption?
q.d. suscita- The Vulgar Latins reads. *Till the Heavens be torn and worn*
bit Deus coe- out. As if the Heavens should be at last like old Garments spent
leste regnum. and Thread-bare, with long use and wearing. But the Heavens
Donec attr- are made of such Stuff as will not waste or decay with age or use:
ratur coelum When or which way soever they end, they shall end by the will
Vul. ac. s. of God (by which they began) not by doing service unto
ut esset a man.
772 sen. s. There are divers Opinions in the point. First, Some think
cere veteris- that all Creatures shall be restored to that perfection they had
cere. Sed se- before the Fall. Secondly, Others, that the Heavens and Ele-
re omnes su- ments only shall be restored. A third sort say that the Heavens
munut ver- and only two of the Elements, the Air and Earth shall be re-
bum Bilthi stored. A fourth say that the old world shall be totally abolis-
pro dictione ed, and a new one Created in the room of it. A fifth Opinion
indeclinabili affirms that the whole world with all the parts and works there-
negativa of, excepting Angels good and bad, the Heaven of the blessed,
Non. Hack- and Hell the place of the damned, shall be totally and finally
vel. Apol. Annihilated; as they were once made out of nothing, so they
of the pow- shall turn to nothing and not return again: And these Interpret
er of God this Scripture, *till the Heavens be no more*, as teaching this utter
in govern- Abolition. To which they add many Texts of Scripture, which
ing the they conceive speaking the same sense, and countenancing their
world. lib. 4. assertion, *Psal. 102. 25, 26. Heb. 1. 10, 11. Isa. 34. 4. Isa. 51. 6.*
c. 13. Sect. 4. *2 Pet. 3. 10. Rev. 6. 14.* In these quoted places we read, *That*
the Elements shall melt with fervent heat, that the Heavens shall
perish and vanish away as the smoke, that they shall be dissolved and
rolled together as a Scroll, that they shall fall as a withered Leaf
as a dry Eigg from the Tree, that they shall pass, yea, pass away
with

with a great noise: From all which it is collected and concluded that there shall be a total Abolition of the visible Heavens at the day of the Resurrection.

Many Arguments are brought to confirm this, chiefly from the uselessness of these Creatures in that state: When man shall have no more need of the Heavens, why should the Heavens be any more? What shall man do with the Sun, or the Stars to enlighten him, with Earth or Water, with Beasts or Fowls to feed or serve him, when he shall have a Spiritual body, and be raised to a state of Incorruption? He shall be lifted above the use of these things, and why should that be, which will be of no use?

Again Heaven and Earth serve here to shew us the invisible things of God, the Footsteps of his Eternal Power and Godhead are seen in the things which are made. But when man shall see God face to face, when God shall fully manifest himself, What need we any more these Glasses? He that hath a good Eye cares not for Spectacles: Man who is the noblest of visible Creatures in his present condition, shall be above the use of Creatures in that condition. Hence some state the Question thus, That when it is said the Heavens shall be no more, The meaning is not, that they shall not be at all, but that they shall not be for those ends and uses, to which they now serve and were at first set up.

Lastly, Many resolve it thus, that the Heavens shall continue according to their Substance, not according to their present Quality; they shall not be Annihilated (say they) but bettered. Bold. As if when God brings man to glory in Heaven, he will bring the heavens to glory also. And that as the beauty of the creature hath been darkened by the sin of man, so it shall receive greater Beauty when the sin of man is done away. The Apostles Language enclines to this (Rom. 8 21.) The creature it self also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. So that till the Heavens be no more according to this position, till the Heavens continue no more in their present state, but are brought to one more perfect, where the alteration will be so great, that it may well be said, they shall be no more what they now are. As we say of a man who is much changed either in Mind or Body, he is not the same man. For (say they) As the vile body of man shall then

be

be fashioned like to the glorious Body of Christ, according to the mighty Power of God, whereby he is able to subdue all things to Himself; So the vilest part of the Frame of the World, much more the Heavens, shall be put into a more excellent fashion then now they are: *The fashion of the World passeth away*, but God will put it in a fashion which shall not pass.

I shall not here interpose my own sense in so great a Variety of Judgment among Learned men, especially, because it is all one to the scope of the Text I am upon, whether we understand it of a total Abolition of these Heavens, or of the Restitution and Renovation of them. For as according to the former Interpretation these Heavens will be no more at all, so according to the latter, these Heavens will be no more as now they are, and so though then they be yet they may be said to be no more. And *Until the Heavens in one of these senses shall be no more, man lyeth down and ariseth no more*, yea, as it followeth in the close of the Verse,

They shall not awake nor be raised out of their sleep.

Death is here compared to sleep, and the Resurrection to awaking. The Metaphor is very Elegant, and it hath been opened at the 13th Verse of the 3^d Chapter, thither I refer the Reader.

Observe first, From the former words.

That the most durable Creatures are perishing, changeable Creatures.

The Heavens are an emblem of continuance: And (as hath been shewed) to say such a thing shall be till the Heavens be no more, is to say it shall ever be: Yet these Heavens are in a perishing condition, and shall be, if not totally Annihilated, yet so much altered from what they are, as will amount to this, *they are no more*: All those Scriptures come up to that, if they reach not the other sense, to which they put very hard. What is there of the Creature to be trusted? Earth is fading, yea, and Heaven too: **Trust not in the Heavens, but in the God of Heaven,** of whom it is said, *In him there is no variableness nor shadow of change*, God is so far from a real change, that he hath not the least shadow of change. But Creatures are so changeable, that there is not in them a shadow of unchangeableness. It is no wonder to see the sublinary World change, to see the state of Men change,

the

the Riches and Peace of Kingdoms change, the Beauty and Purity or a Church change, when even the Heavens shall change and be no more what they have been? When we are taught that the most durable things perish and change, how changeable are those things which are most subject to perishing?

Secondly, Consider under what notions *Job* represents Death. *They shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep.*

Hence Observe,

We ought to familiarise death to our selves, to put it under the fairest and easiest apprehensions.

Some translate Death into such terrible shapes, and represent it to themselves under such affrighting forms, that they live in bondage through the fear of Death all their dayes; do as the Spirit of God teacheth you: Cloath it with pleasant expressions, call it the Undressing and Uncloathing of your selves, call it rest, conceive it under the notion of sleep, and then you will not fear but welcome it; Is any man afraid to go to Bed? Thus we should allay the Bitterness, beautifie the Deformiey, take off the Edg, and pull out the Sting of Death: By such sweet and soft thoughts of it, as the Spirit of God suggests. Sleep is a short death, and death is but a long sleep. The Babylonians are threatened with death under the name of a long sleep, (*Jer. 51. 57.*) *I will make drunk her Princes and her Wise men, her Captains and her Rulers, and her Mighty men: And they shall sleep a perpetual sleep and shall not awake.* 'Tis a judgment to be cast into a sleep like Death, but 'tis a mercy that Death is but like a sleep; To sleep a perpetual sleep and not to awake, is to die: But they who are dead shall awake out of sleep. For as Death is a sleep, so it is but a sleep: Death is not a perpetual sleep, though he who in stead of sleeping, dieth, is said to fall into a perpetual sleep; Death compared with ordinary sleep, is a perpetual sleep, but Death in it self considered or considered rather according to the appointment of God, is not a perpetual sleep. There shall be an awakning and a rising, we shall sleep no more, when the Heavens are no more. *Job* is expresse for this in the 19th Chapter, and here he assures us that man shall awake from the Grave at last, while he saith it will be long ere he awake. Man hath done his work before he falls into this sleep, but man must awake before he receive either his wages or reward, ne

must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ, that every one may receive according to what he hath done in the flesh, whether it be good or evil. They (as was lately toucht) who have done evil, shall receive Wages, and they who have done good shall receive a Reward. Such as our work was when we fell asleep, such will our receipt be when we awake. Job was so full of this hope, that he should both awake at that day, and receive a good reward, that he is even in haste to go to Bed, and petitions for a Grave in the next Verse, to which I also hasten.

J O B Chap. 14. Vers. 13, 14.

O that thou wouldst hide me in the Grave, that thou wouldst keep me in secret, until thy wrath be past, that thou wouldst appoint me a set time, and remember me.

If a man die, shall he live again? All the dayes of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come.

J O B is an earnest and an humble Suiter, for that which Nature least desires, yea for that which Nature abhors. He petitions for the Grave and woes Death, as if there were some beauty in darkness, or loveliness in that king of Terrours.

Verse 13. *O that thou wouldst hide me in the Grave, that thou wouldst keep me in secret, until thy wrath be past, that thou wouldst appoint me a set time, and remember me.*

The words fall under various Interpretations. Some conceive *Job* begging to be hid in the day of account, which is a day of wrath to the wicked, and of the Revelation of the righteous judgment of God to all. The Popish writers find here their *Limbus patrum*, or their imaginary Receptacle of those souls which died in Faith, before Christ came in the flesh, this say they is the secret place to which *Job* wishes he might retire, that by a present banishment from the world he might get out of the noise and sense of those evils, with which the Scean of his life was fill'd and made uncomfortable.

Secondly,

Secondly, Say others, Job in this Prayer for a Grave, doth plainly renew that Suit which he had made more then once before, *to die*, as if he had said, *Considering my sad estate, the burden and pressures that lie upon me, Death is better to me then Life, and the Grave more eligible then my Bed-chamber, 'twere better for me to be under the Earth, or in the Earth; free among the Dead, then to walk upon the Earth, fettered with these Afflictions, among the Living.*

Thirdly, That having said, *Man lying down shall not awake till the Heavens be no more*, he only subjoyns that Death would be welcome to him, nor would he move against it, if after he had passed that darksome Valley, he might in some reasonable time return again to the Land, and enjoy the Light of the Living; if a time for such a return might be set, then he could chearfully descend into the Grave: But as Job had often argued the Impossibility (considering the Decrees of God concerning dying man) of such a return, so I cannot conceive him aiming at the grant of it in this Request, and therefore I lay it by, as an unsutable and improper Interpretation.

Fourthly, That which carrieth the sense most clearly is, that Job speaks like a man besieged with trouble, and compassed about with sad distractions: Who makes request for this and that, and he knows not what, he looks for something to ease his Grief, and therefore wisheth for any thing, whatever comes next to hand, or lies uppermost in his Thoughts, he cares not what it be, so it be not what it is: Put me under Ground, hide me in the Earth, Lord, do what thou wilt with me, so I may be set at liberty, from the Bands and Chains of my present pressing Miseries, if I could but get release from this Prison, send me to the Prison of the Grave, and I readily submit to thy good pleasure, yea, that would be pleasing unto me: *O that thou wouldest hide me in the Grave.*

The Grave hath been opened before, and the manner of this wish about it, (chap. 6. 8.) *who will give, who will bestow the favour of a Burial upon me, and put me into the Possession of the house of Death.* He speaks as if his Requests were not only difficult, but, only not impossible, or as if it would be costly to the Granter.

Quis dabit?
Hebraismus
opantis vi-
let idem quod
utinam, &
rei optate
aut difficul-
tatem aut
impossibili-
tatem asserit.
Who
Pined.

Who will hide me in the Grave?

וְיִסְתֵּר מִי
recon-
dere hinc
וְיִסְתֵּר מִי the-
sauri a re-
condendo, sic
וְיִסְתֵּר מִי i
a reponendo
quod in diem
crastinum i.e.
וְיִסְתֵּר מִי
reponcren-
tur. Druf.
Sepulchrum
est quasi
scrinium vel
capsa in-
quam repo-
nitur corpus.

Hide me as a Treasure, so the Original intimates, Treasures are hidden things, as the Notation both of the Greek and Latine words teacheth. A Treasure is substance or riches laid up for the day following, or for the time to come, *O that thou wouldst hide me in the Grave*, yet not as Trash but Treasure, not as a rotten Carcass, but as a precious Jewel: *The bodies of Believers are Treasure as well as their Souls, their earthly part is precious as well as their Heavenly.*

The Grave may be taken two ways: First, Strictly and literally, for the place of Burial, or for the house of Death.

Whence Note,

That the Grave is a hiding place, the Grave is a sure hiding place.

When we are once hidden there, we lie ^{not} open to more violence: The Grave is a shelter from all Storms: We need not fear that it will either Rain or Blow through that House, that's the reason why they in the Book of the Revelation desired Death when the Vials of Gods wrath were pouring out upon the Earth. Though some have not been free from the rage of men in the Grave, yet none have felt it. *O that thou wouldst hide me in the Grave*; I have met with this strain of sorrow before, therefore I do but touch it here.

Secondly, As the Grave in Scripture is taken for the place of the Dead, so for any place where the Living are hid, or hide themselves. *A secret place is the Grave for a living man*; In times of Persecutions the Saints were forced to bury themselves alive, because the malicious Enemy sought their lives, (Heb. 11. 36.) *They wandered in Desarts, and in Mountains, and in Dens, and in Caves of the Earth*; Thus the old Believers were buried alive: It is said of Obadiah (1 Kings 18.) *That he hid the Lords Prophets by fifty in a Cave*: These Caves were Graves of living men. Some understand Jobs meaning of such a Grave: And that he did not desire Death, but the securing of his Life, or to be hid alive, not to be hid in Death: He would be somewhere in safe custody, out of the reach of those troubles which annoyed him: The next clause doth somewhat favour this sense, *O that thou wouldst hide me in the Grave.*

Qui a com-
muni homi-
num confor-
tio superari
sive ut immi-
nentia sibi
pericula sive
debita sup-
plicia decli-
narent, in
cavernis et
in sepul-
chris habita-
re solebant.
Bold.

And

And keep me secret.

These words are but an Explication or Repetition of the former; *Job* doubles his Request to shew how strongly his heart was fixt upon it: *O that thou wouldest keep me secret, How long?*

Until thy wrath be past.

That is, the effects of wrath: The Letter of the Original is, *thy nostril*, because in the Nose or Nostrils wrath and anger shew themselves, we breath anger, and the breath of the Lord is nothing else but his wrath, which like a stream of Brimstone kindles the fiery *Tophet*, (Isa. 30. 33.) *Job* desires the Lord to let this breath pass, and then he is willing to appear out of his Grave, or to be kept no longer secret: As if he had said, I cannot stand in the open view of thy wrath, or in the Face of thy fierce displeasure; *Oh that thou wouldest hide me till thy wrath be past*: God put *Moses* in the cleft of the Rock; and hid him with his hand, *sape est a-while his glory passed by*, (Exod. 33. 12.) Much more have we need to be hid while the wrath of God passeth by, or until his wrath be past.

Hence Observe,

First, *God in his actings towards man, shews himself like a wrathful man.*

The wrath of God is not a Passion in him, but an Action towards us. He Acts as men when they are angry, but he suffers nothing by his anger: He smites and wounds, and pulls down and destroys like a wrathful, yea, like an enraged man; yet he doth this in the exactest frame and sweetest composure of his Spirit: The wrath of God never disjoyns him, never puts him out of order, as the wrath of man doth. *The wrath of man is the rage of man, but the wrath of God is the reason of God.* His wrath toward all is full of serenity, and it is full of tender Mercy to his own.

Secondly, *Job* fearing the wrath of God, resorts to God for shelter and hiding, *O that thou wouldest hide me till thy wrath be past.* When a man (whom we fear) is angry with us we run from him, and go to some friend with this request, *O that you would hide me till the wrath of this man be over*; When *Rebekah* understood that her son *Esau* was wroth with *Jacob*, and

*Nasus ira-
que tumente
& fumante
naso mani-
festari solet.*

*שׁוּב non
semper est re-
verti redire
sape est a-
verti recede-
re. Hinc*

*חַשׁוּבָה con-
versio animi.
sc. ad Deum,
& חַשׁוּבָה*

*aversio re-
cessio. Druf.*

comforted himself purposing to kill him, she advised Jacob to flee to his Uncle Laban and tarry there, till his Brothers wrath should turn away, (*Gen. 27. 43, 44.*) She doth not direct him to go to Esau, and desire protection from him till his own wrath were turned away. Were it not strange if a King being wroth with one of his Subjects, he should go to the same King and say, *O hide me till thy wrath be past*, yet thus Job speaks.

Hence Observe,

That our only refuge from the wrath of God, is God himself.

Nothing can hide us from the wrath of God, but the Mercy of God. As God hides his people from the wrath of men, (*Psal. 27. 5.*) *In the time of trouble he shall hide me in his Pavilion, in the secret of his Tabernacle shall he hide me.* And again, *In the shadow of thy Wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast.* As (*I say*) God hides his people from the wrath of men, so also from his own wrath. When a Believer apprehends God angry, he knows not whither to go, but unto God: He appeals from God to God, from an angry God to a pleased God, from the wrath of God to the mercy of God, from God in himself to God in his Son. Carnal men have poor shifts, when God is angry they hide in man; Can the Power and Mercy of a Creature, be a covering against the wrath and indignation of the Creator? Yet this is all the covering which a Carnal man enquires after. *The Kings and Captains* (*Rev. 6.*) *call upon the Rocks and Mountains to hide them*, That is, they apply themselves to worldly means, to worldly helps and powers, to these they cry, *hide us from the wrath of God*, but they know not what this meaneth, to make the love of God a refuge from the Anger of God. Such a spirit Christ discovers while he forbids the tears of the Daughters of Jerusalem, (*Luke 23. 30.*) *Weep not for me but weep for your selves, and for your Children: Why so? Sad dayes are coming, so sad, That they shall say to the Mountains fall on us, and to the Hills cover us;* Not as if they should think the Hills would hear or pity them, but because they could find none to do it, and they might as soon make a Mountain move to their help, as move men to help them.

Again, Mountains and Hills may be taken there for the greatest powers and strengths of men, or for men of great strength and power: In which sense it is said in the 2d of *Isaiah*, *the day*

of

of the Lord shall be against the high Mountains; So then, to call to the Mountains for covering in a day of trouble, is at best but to expect it at the hand of man. These are miserable shifts. God doth so overrule the world by his Providence, that sometimes the Earth helps the women (Rev. 12. 16.) in a day of trouble, but the woman (that is, the true Church) doth not cry to the Earth (meer men of the world) for help; God makes the Hills and Mountains cover his people in a day of his wrath, but they do not go to Hills and Mountains for covering against his wrath. David puts the Question (Psal. 139. 8.) *Whither shall I fly from thy presence?* He resolves it presently, that neither Heaven nor Hell, nor the uttermost parts of the Earth could afford him a corner for security, or a hiding-place from the Hand of God; We must look for a protecting hand in God, when we are afraid of his smiting hand: *Only Divine love hides from Divine wrath. This was shadowed in the discription of the Ark, in which the Tables of the Law were laid up, (Exod. 25.) There the Mercy-seat was put upon the Ark, the Cherubims covering it with their Wings, implying that the Mercy of God only protects us from his wrath.* The wrath of God is caused by sin (which is the transgression of the Law) but to shew that Mercy covers from wrath, the Mercy-seat was made to cover the Ark wherein that Law was reserved, which discovers both the sin of man and the wrath of God against it. *The wrath of God had never been revealed against man, if man had not sinned against the Law, yet now God sits between the Cherubims over the Mercy-seat, to cover that Law which through sin causeth wrath; With one hand he gives a Law, and with another hand he hid us from wrath: Out of his hand went a fiery Law, (Deut. 33. 2.) And out of his Hand went a shining Gospel, and with that a Sun of Righteousness with healing in his Wings: When that fire would burn us, this Sun warms us, while the flames of that would consume us, the Wings of this overshadowed us, and hide us till the wrath of God be past. Thus our hiding from the wrath of God is in the love of God.* Hence also that gracious invitation, (Isa 26. 20.) *Come my people enter into your Chambers, until the Indignation be overpast:* Those Chambers into which God invited his people, are none other but himself; When they could not build, or find out Chambers to hide themselves while his Indignation smoked, himself will be their Chamber. One of his. Bold.

the

the Ancients interprets those Chambers to be the Grave, into which the Saints should willingly go to hide themselves in the time of Antichrists rage, of which he conceives that to be a Prophecy. However, we are sure *The Name of the Lord is not only a hiding Chamber, but a strong Tower, the Righteous run into it and are safe. O that thou wouldest hide me until thy wrath be past.*

Thirdly, Job perceiving a storm of wrath about him, dares not bide it, but seeks a hiding place.

Hence Observe,

Man is not able to bear the wrath of God, or to stand before God when he is angry.

Job was a man of unspotted Integrity, Perfect, Upright, fearing God, eschewing evil, yet he was afraid, when God appeared in wrathful dispensations. The wrath of God as threatened in the Word is sleighted by unbelievers, but when it is felt either in the Conscience or upon the Flesh, the stoutest run and hide: *The Love of God is undervalued by those who know it not, but a soul that hath once tasted that the Lord is Gracious, and lives in the love of God, this soul is swallowed up with love, and values it more then life.* 'Tis so with those who know not the wrath of God, their hearts being hardned: They say with Pharaoh, *Who is the Lord?* But when Conscience is awakened, the Heart touched, the Eye opened, then Horrour and Amazement take hold of them, as pain upon a Woman in Travel, (Isa. 2. 19.) *They shall go into the holes of the Rocks, and to the Caves of the Earth, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his Majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the Earth.* When God comes with terrible shakings, they shall hide themselves whose terrour made others shake. The wrath of a powerful man is dreadful, *The wrath of a King (saith Solomon) is as the roaring of a Lion,* What is then the wrath of God? If Rebeckah was so sensible of the wrath of Esau against Jacob, that she durst not venture Jacob into his angry presence: What are they who make no halte to be hidden from an angry God, or to have the anger of God appeased, and turned away from them?

Fourthly Observe,

There may be sensible feelings of the wrath of God, even upon those who are dearest unto God.

It is Job that prays, *Hide me till thy wrath be overpast:* There was indeed more fear of wrath among Believers under Legal Admi-

administrations, then after that fuller breaking forth and appearance of the grace of God bringing salvation under the Gospel; so we may understand that of the Apostle (*Rom. 8. 15.*) *Ye have not received the spirit of bondage to fear again.* Paul (according to this interpretation) speaks not of a person, but of the whole state of the Church; giving the sense thus, ye have not received the spirit of bondage to fear, ye are under the Gospel; the spirit of bondage was that which properly belonged to the times of the Law; when little of Gospel light appeared, *Ante Christum erat* fear and terrour held the people of God in bondage. But this *duxio, sedula* is the time of grace, the day of love, the day of shedding the love of God abroad in our hearts by the holy Ghost, therefore *et obsequium* be of good cheer, live like freemen and like sons, not like bondmen or servants.

Fifthly, he praies hide me till thy wrath be past: Job was sensible of wrath, but he knew assuredly that it was not abiding wrath.

Hence Observe.

The wrath of God to his own people, is not an everlasting wrath.

The wrath of God against wicked men is an everlasting wrath, they cannot be hid till the wrath of God be overpast, for it will never passe, (*Job. 3. 36.*) *He that beleeveth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth upon him, and shall abide to all Eternity.* The appearings of wrath are terrible, but who can abide the abidings of wrath? *Who may abide the day of his coming? And who shall stand when he appeareth? For he is like a Refiners fire,* (*Mal. 3. 2.*) Wicked men cannot abide the coming of Christ, when he is but like refining fire to purge out their dross, how then will they abide the day of his coming, when he is like consuming fire, to devour both them and their Dross?

Sixthly, Job was under grievous pains, a cup of sorrow was put to his mouth, yet he moves not so much to have the Cup of sorrow pass from him, as to have the wrath of God pass from him.

Hence Observe,

A good heart is more sensible of Divine displeasure, then of outward pain.

He fears the appearance of wrath more then the feeling of smart,

*Patet hinc
tam acerbum
esse omnibus
ira Dei sen-
sum ut nihil
sit quod ho-
mines non
perferre ma-
lint. Merl.*

smart. It is a work of grace to be afraid of the anger of God, and it provokes him as much when his wrath, as when his love is slighted. *Many tremble at the corrections of God, but there are few who tremble at the anger of God.* The holy Prophet (*Jer. 10. 24.*) seems to invite correction, so he might be free from anger, *Correct me O Lord, but not in thine anger*; Let me see thou lovest me, and then smite me if thou wilt: anger smarts worse then any rod upon the soul of a beleever; but 'tis the rod of God, not the wrath of God which makes an unbeleever smart, *Let there be no more mighty hail and thunder, take away this death, saith a Pharaoh, take away thy displeasure, let thy wrath passe, saith a Job, a David, yet at last the wrath of God will be more painfull then pain, more deadly then death it self to a Pharaoh, wrath will burn hotter then fire in hell for evermore.*

Lastly. See *Jobs* temper heare, he trembled at the wrath of God, and was afraid: we read him full of faith and confidence, (*chap. 13. 16, 81.*) *I know I shall be justified, and he also shall be my salvation*; there he stood in the light of the favour of God, here he is clouded with fear, and compassed about with darknesse.

Hence Observe

That the best of beleivers do not alwaies retain the same degree, and evidence of holy faith.

There estate is alwaies sure, but their estate is not alwaies clear: their condition is the same, but their apprehensions about it vary; Now they overflow with joy because they see the pleasing face of God, soon after they are filled with fear, and would be hidden from his wrath, *O that thou wouldest hide me till thy wrath be past*, that's his first wish.

That thou wilt appoint me a set time.

*תָּשִׂית לִי חֶקֶק
constituas mi-
hi legem aut
praeceptum,
statutum. i.e.
certum &
praefinitum
terminum
Merc.*

This is his second wish.

But for what? or to what purpose would he have a set time? Times relate to things or actions. As to every purpose there is a time set (*Eccl. 3. 1.*) so, to set a time supposeth a purpose for it; What was *Jobs* purpose for which he thus earnestly desires a time might be set.

We may very clearly referre it to the wish foregoing, *O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave*: As if he had said, as I beg to
go

go to Bed in the Grave, so I beg of thee to appoint me a set time when I shall go to that desired and longed for Bed of the Grave.
O that thou wouldest appoint me a time.

The word which we Translate *set time*, signifies properly a Statute, a Law, or Ordinance: There is a double Law, a Law of Things, and a Law of Times, and the Word bears both, therefore we translate well, *O that thou wouldest appoint me a set time*, or a Law concerning the time; But dares Job ask God a set time? God sets us a time, but may we desire God to set us a time? The Jews were approved for this by Moses, (Psal. 78. 47.) *They limited the holy One of Israel*, they put him to a time, or set him a day, by which if he did not help them, they did not believe he could help them. It is insufferable presumption to set God a time: And it wants not danger to move God to set us a time. All the actings of Job in this state are not warrantable: Many of them are not for our Imitation, but Caution: Job expresseth a troubled spirit while he Prays for an abatement of his trouble; This Prayer was not the breathing of his grace, but the breaking forth of his sorrow: He would be in the Grave, he would have a set time, he must have things brought to an Issue, In all this we see not a rule for Prayer, but an error of Passion.

Hence Note,

That extremity of pain may put a good man upon unadvised Petitions.

A distressed Soul often makes distracted Prayers, and desires more that his own will, then that the will of God may be done. The Will of God, his Word of Command, or his Word of Promise are our Rule and Warrant what to ask. They ask besides all the Rules which God hath set who ask a set time. Hence take two Deductions.

First, *That it is the sole priviledg of God to set and appoint times.*

As God hath appointed to men the bounds of their Habitation, So also he hath determined the times, (Acts 17. 26.) And as he hath set the times of Nations and People in general, so of singular Persons, *My times are in thy hand* (saith David, Psal. 31. 15.) That is, thou hast the dispose of them: While he saith *my times*, he doth not speak himself the Master, but the Servant of time. Again, *My times are in thy hand*, that is, all my times I reserve

*Sciamus has
perturbatum
vimali Jobum
dicere nec
certe nec
quicquam
hinc posse
colligi, nisi
quod levotio-
nem mali
quoquo modo
postulat.
Merc.
Non est quod
hec quis ac-
curatius ad
legitimam ora-
tionis leges
exigat. Merl.*

none of them in my own hand : My times of trouble and my times of comfort, my times of joy and my times of sorrow, my times of honour and my times of reproach, when I shall fall into affliction, and when I shall be delivered out of affliction, how long I shall live and when I shall die, all these times are in thy hand. Nor did *David* at all desire to have his times or any part of his times out of Gods hand ; And as it is our duty to leave our times in Gods hand, so it is our comfort that they are in so good, in so wise a Hand : We should not only be content but rejoyce that our times are there. Man is not wise enough to use the times which God sets him, much less is he Wise enough to set his own times.

Secondly Note,

It is our duty to refer all the Circumstances of our Petitions to the Wisdom of God.

We may be Suiters to God but we must not be his Counsellors, nor our own Carvers when or where, how much or by what means we would have the Mercies which we ask for. *Job* spake well in one respect, though he would have a set time, yet he took not upon him to set the time. It was his failing to desire a set time, but it had been a great sin for him to set the time. Man must expect a Law from God, he must not give himself a Law, much less may he give the Law to God. *O that thou wouldest appoint me a set time.*

And that thou wouldest remember me.

Et constitu-
as mihi tem-
pus in quo re-
corderis mei
Vulg.

This is his 3d desire ; *he would be remembred* : Some joyn these two latter wishes into one, *O that thou wouldest appoint a set time wherein to remember me* : But for what, or in what would he be remembred ? Either thus, remember to hide me in the grave at that set time, or Lord when thou hidest me in the grave be pleased to remember me ; The grave is a place of forgetfulness, *David* complains (*Psal. 31. 12.*) *I am forgotten as a dead man out of mind* : *Job* is willing to be among the Dead, but not to be forgotten, or out of the mind of God ; Let the World forget me, I can bear that, but I cannot bear it that God should forget me : *O that thou wouldest remember me*, *Heman* (*Psal. 88. 5.*) describing his sorrows, saith he, *was free among the dead, like as the slain that lie in the Grave, whom thou remembrest no more.* Dead men are, as if they were, not only out of the memory of men, but
of

of God himself: Job was content to die out of the World, but not to die out of the Memory of God: He liked a grave of Earth, but he liked not the grave of Forgetfulness; *Set me a time for the Grave, and remember to hide me there, or remember me when I am hidden there.*

Lastly, This Prayer, *remember me*, may be understood as a general Prayer for good at the hand of God: **The remembrance of God intimates all good to man.** 'Tis good enough if he remember us for good, as *Nehemiah* prayed he would; to remember notes chiefly these two things.

First, To value and esteem: Worthless things are not fit for a Treasury, much less for our Memory; who would keep a Record of that which no man cares to know, nor shall be the wiser if he do know it?

Secondly, It notes Care. When we would help a friend or do him a courtesie, we remember him and have him often in our thoughts.

Some restrain *Jobs* request for remembrance to that special Act of Power and Mercy, the raising of his body from the grave. Others confine it to the repairing of his broken Family, and the gift of Children in stead of those who were slain: As if he deplored the loss of his Sons and Daughters, and that he was as a Tree cut down, which sends out no Suckers, or that he was (as the Enoch saith of himself in the Prophet) *a dry tree*, which bears neither Leaf nor Fruit. And therefore Prays, *O that thou wouldest remember me in this.* The word is often used by God in reference to that special mercy: The giving of Children, *Rachel* was barren a great while, yet at last (the Text saith) the Lord remembered *Rachel*, (Gen. 30. 22.) *Hanna* being barren Prays in this stile, (1 Sam. 1. 11.) *O Lord of Hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thy Handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thy Handmaid, but wilt give unto thine Handmaid a Manchild, then &c.* The Hebrew word signifying a Manchild (not that used by *Hanna*) springs from this Root, because a Manchild preserves the memory of the Family, whereas the Female or Daughter looseth her name in Marriage. The answer which God gave to *Hanna*, runs also in the same stile (ver. 16.) *And Elkanah knew Hanna his wife, and the Lord remembered her.* When the Lord took away *Jobs* Children, he took from him his remembrance, or those who would have preserved

Aquinas putat divinam recordationem sumi pro resurrectione & vita. Ista phrasis recordari aliqujus in sacro codice saepe usurpatur ab ijs qui prolem a Deo postulant, praesertim masculinam. Bold. A זכר quae hic habetur venit Zachar i. e. masculus quasi patris memoria.

his name and memory : Which Bildad seems to aim at in his Description of the Judgments of God upon wicked men (*Job 18. 17.*) *His remembrance shall perish in the Earth, and he shall have no name in the streets :* That is, he shall have no Son to bear his Name, or to keep his Memorial alive, when he is dead.

Now whether we understand this passage in general, or restrain it to either of these Particulars, we may Learn.

That there is nothing more desirable then to be remembred of God, and that to be remembred of God is the accomplishment of all our desires.

We can ask no more of God but to remember us : For as our remembrance of God is the summe of all our duty to him, so Gods remembrance of us is the summe of all his mercies to us. When the Ark had floated, and had been tossed many dayes upon the Waters of that mighty Deluge, the Text saith, *God remembred Noah* (*Gen. 8. 3.*) **Though our Ark be driven in a tempestuous Sea, yet it shall neither sink nor split, while we Sail in the thoughts of God.** It may be much if some men remember us : When *Joseph* a Prisoner had expounded the Butlers dream to liberty and enlargement, all the Fee he asked for his pains was, *Remember me when thou comest to Pharaoh :* That is, speak a good word for me, do me a courtesie at Court, when thou art restored thither. The ungrateful Butler forgot *Joseph*, but God did not : And though *Pharaohs* Butlet did not remember *Joseph* for Interpreting his Dream, yet God sent *Pharaoh* a Dream, which at last caused the Butler to remember both his own fault against *Pharaoh*, and his forgetfulnesse of *Joseph*. **If God remember us he will find out some way or other that men shall.** And though a Friend who loves us and keeps us in his memory, may not be able to do us good (he may want power though he want no good will) yet the Power of God is as strong as his Memory, he is able to do us good, and can command all both persons and things to work together for our good. 'Tis a mercy, *If God think upon us, though it be to afflict us*, if he remembers us though it be with a Rod ; (even that remembrance is an evidence of his Care over us, and love to us.) Then how comfortable is it for him to remember us with a Staffe for our support and comfort !

The Thief upon the Cross gathers all his petitions into this one,

one, Lord, remember me when thou comest to thy Kingdom, if we have but a place in the Memory of Christ, we shall not want a place in the Kingdom of Christ. Let us get into the heart of God, and we are sure enough, to have all the holy desires of our own Hearts : If we once have a place in the Heart of God, he will not cast us out of his Memory, though he casts us into trouble. He remembers his in Prison and in Chains, in sick Beds, and in the Valley of the shadow of Death ; Though he bury us in the Grave, yet he will not bury his Thoughts of us. We use to say of men, *out of sight, out of mind* ; but, as we cannot be hid in any secret place out of the sight of God, so God will never let us fall out of his Mind.

From all take this Deduction.

If it be such a treasure of Love and Mercy to have God remember us, what a treasure of wrath and misery is it to be everlastingly forgotten by God !

Wicked men shall never be remembred by God for good, nor shall they ever be forgotten for evil. The Memory which God keeps of them, and of what they have done, will torment them as much as their own memory of it will. How glad would they be if God would but forget them, how glad would they be if they could forget themselves ! But as they can remember no good they have done, so they shall not forget the evil they have done, and as God will not remember them for good, so he cannot (because he will not, and he will not because he is Just) forget to pour out upon them the utmost and extreamest evils.

Job having presented God with this threefold Request : To be hid in the Grave ; To have a set time appointed him ; And to be remembred : He passeth from Petitioning to a strange kind of Questioning, and from both to the Highest and Noblest kind of Resolving.

Verse 14. *If a man die, shall he live again ? All the dayes of my appointed time will I wait till my change come.*

There is much variety of Conjecture about the meaning of these words.

Take this Præcaution, Job doth not speak here as doubting, whether a man that dies shall live any more ; He is clear for the

*Non est dubi-
tantis de re-
surrectione
mortuorum
ad vitam
eternam.*

the resurrection of the body unto life, and for the life eternall of whole man after the resurrection. It is usuall both in Scripture and common usage to propound that by way of doubt or question, which yet is held as an undoubted position. *Job* did neither doubt that man shall die, nor that he shall live again: though he put an *if* to the one, and a *question* about the other.

*Si mortuus
fuerit vir
impius, fieri
ne potest vi-
vat? Chal.*

The *Chaldee* Paraphrast seems to understand him of eternal life, but applies it to a wicked man: *If a man die*: that is, if a wicked man die, shall he live again? shall he enjoy eternal life? no, though he live eternally, yet he shall not enjoy life one moment. His second life shall be the second death. He shall live as life notes the union of soul and body, but he shall not live as life notes the communion of man with God.

Philippus.

But though this be true, yet I conceive it quite beside *Iobs* scope.

*Tantum opus
admiratur,
non negat.
Merc.*

Secondly, Others interpret it of the resurrection in generall: And render the question as an admiration: *If a man die, shall he live again!* He shall live, and is it not wonderfull that he should! The resurrection is a miraculous work: it shall raise our thoughts about the power of the everliving God, when we hear his power can raise man from death to everlasting life.

*In scripturis
interrogatio
asserens ne-
gationi simi-
lis est, & ne-
gans asserti-
oni.*

Yet usually in Scripture when the interrogation is put without a negative particle, the sense is negative, as (*Psa. 56. 7.*) *Shall they escape by iniquity?* no, they shall not escape: and when the interrogation is put with a negative particle, the sense is affirmative: as (*Jer. 5. 9.*) *Shall I not visit for these things, saith the Lord, and shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?* Yes, I will visit for these things, and my soul shall be avenged on such a nation as this. According to this interpretation, *If a man die, shall he live again?* must be rendred by a deniall, he shall not live again. Hence

A third opinion expounds it by a plain negation, *If a man die, shall he live again?* no, he shall not, that is, he shall not live in this world, nor return any more to a natural life. And hence

*Conditiona-
liter simi pu-
tat Cajeta-
nus,*

A Fourth interprets *Job* as speaking conditionally, or upon an impossible supposition: As if he had said, I know and am assured, That if a man dies he cannot live again a life of nature. But if such a thing might be, and God would appoint me a set time when it should be, how willingly would I die and wait all those

those days of my appointed time, (how many soever they should be) till my change come; that is, till God restore me from the state of death and the grave, to such an estate of outward comforts and abundance as I once enjoied. But I cannot conceive *Job* so in love with a natural life, as thus to hanker after it by such remote conditions, and groundlesse wishes. And therefore,

Fifthly, I encline to those, who expound the question in the first part of the verse, as an absolute negation: *If a man die, he shall live no more*, that is, a natural life. And the latter part of the verse, (*All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come*) as a testimony either of his submission to the will of God for the time of his death, or of his faith and full assurance of a resurrection to eternal life. As if he had said, *Though when I die I shall not live again in this world, yet I am willing to die when God will, and I beleieve I shall live again in the world to come, and do therefore wait in faith till this change shall come.* Hence

Sixthly, *Job* is here conceived correcting his former wish, and reprehending himself for it; As if he had said, *I indeed desired the Lord to appoint me a set time, when he would restore me, but why do I vex my self and trouble the Lord with vain wishes, as if this were a petition befitting me to ask or God to grant? why should I expect that which was never granted to any man: That being dead I might live again?* *Quasi seipsum reprehendat quod talia oret, &c. Sanct.*

Lastly, Some give out his meaning thus, If thou wouldest grant me my wish, and hide me in the grave, appointing me a set time, when thou wouldest be pleased to do this for me; then should I think my self happy, because if I were once dead, I know I shall return no more to the miseries of this life, upon which condition I would be glad to wait with patience for the grave, what time soever thou shouldest appoint me, till that my change by death should come: or, being dead and laid in my grave, I would wait thy appointed time for my resurrection unto life.

All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come.

That God appoints out the time of man, and that man shall live out and cannot outlive that appointment, was shewed at

the 5th verse, I will not here renew that discourse.

צְלִימֵי מִלְחָמָה The Hebrew is *all the days of my warfare*, The reason of which hath also been shewed (*chap. 7. 1.*) The days of man are but travel and warfare, a continual combat with temptations and trials, as was opened there: The Scripture delights to set forth the sorrows of mans life under those two similitudes of a wayfaring man and a warfaring man. Under both notions, the duty of the text (waiting) is also shadowed.

*Cunctis diebus
militia mea
expectabo. Mon.*

To wait hath four things in it.

First, An act of patience, he that waits must be content to stay: *He that beleeves will not make haste, that is, he waits, and he that waits makes haste to beleeve, or hope, which is the second thing.*

Secondly, It hath an act of hope in it, he that waiteth is in expectation to receive: He hopes mercy will come at last: To wait upon God implies there is somewhat to be had from God. He that hath no hope will never wait.

Thirdly, An act of humility, he that is in a waiting condition is in a low condition, And as his condition is low, so his spirit should be lowly, waiting speaks the duty of a servant.

Fourthly, The waiting here intended carries in it utmost perseverance, *All the days of my appointed time will I wait.* Some wait, but 'tis only for a time: they are short-breath'd and their patience quickly tires. That wicked King said, *this evil is of the Lord, why should I wait upon him any longer?* (2 Kin. 6. 33.) He that waits indeed, continues waiting, he waits long, and he will wait yet longer. As a good heart will not let God wait long, no not at all (willingly) for obedience, so he is willing to wait as long as God sees good for deliverance. We must not let God stay long for our work, but we must stay as long as God pleaseth for his work.

Hence Observe,

First, *It is our duty to wait Gods time fully.*

All the days of my appointed time will I wait; and this both in regard of personal and of publike desires or needs, (*Hab. 2. 2, 3.*) *The vision is for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak and not lie,* that is, it shall not fail: All failing is a kinde of lying: He that fails of truth when he speaks, lies in word, and he that fails of performing what he speaks, lies in deed. The vision of God speaks and will not lie: but it speaks not till the end

end, therefore we muſt wait till the end: ſo the Prophet adviſeth in the next words, *though it tarry, wait for it, for it will certainly come, and not tarry.* It will not tarry beyond the time, but it may tarry to the very end of the time: then wait the longeſt day, and to the utmoſt of that day. It is ſaid that the people of *Iſrael* were aſhamed, when they ſaw that *Moses* ſtaid ſo long, (*Exo. 33.*) they could wait no longer, they thought he was loſt in the mount: *Come, let us make us Gods, to go before us, for as for this Moses we know not what is become of him;* They who will not ſtay for God, make haſte to Idols, and they who will not wait in the way of God, runne destructive ways. *Samuel* directed *Saul* to go down to *Gilgal*, and there to ſtay for him ſeven days (*1 Sam. 10. 8.*) according to this appointment *Saul* tarried ſeven days, (*1 Sam. 13. 8.*) but *Samuel* came not, and the people were ſcattered from him: hereupon *Saul* calls for the burnt offering and peace offerings, and he offered his burnt offering: and was he not to be excuſed in this? had not he waited long enough? *Samuel* ſaid he ſhould come the ſeventh day, and *Saul* waited for him ſeven days: why then doth *Samuel* chide with him (at the 11th verſe) ſaying, *What haſt thou done?* *Saul* answers, *Because thou cameſt not within the days appointed, I forced my ſelf and offered a burnt offering.* But would *Samuel* break promiſe? was there yea and nay with him? How is it then that *Saul* ſaith, *he came not at the time appointed:* *Saul* ſtaid ſeven days, but he ſtaid not ſeven days quite out, he ſtaid the ſeventh day and a great part of it, and no *Samuel* came, but *Saul* would not ſtay the laſt hour; *Samuel* came at the end of the ſeventh day, and ſo made his word good, but becauſe *Saul* waited not to the end of the ſeventh day, he fell into that great evil. *Thou haſt done fooliſhly,* ſaith *Samuel* (ver. 13.) *and thy kingdom ſhall not continue,* becauſe thy patience was ſo ſhort thy power ſhall be ſhortened. **Take heed of giving up your hopes: ſay not the Lords time is paſt, he will not come.** We know what they do who are obliged to pay money upon bonds, on a certain day. It ſatisfies not the Law, that they waited at the place appointed, about noon or toward the evening of that day, and the creditour came not, they muſt wait till the going down of the Sun, and then make the tender, or elſe the forfeiture may be taken. Thus we muſt wait on God to the laſt day, and every part of the laſt day,

till our changes or our comforts come. If we give over before the Sun go down, we shall go down in darknesse. *Ye have need of patience* (Heb. 10. 36, 37.) *that when you have done the will of God, ye may receive the promise:* that is, the thing promised. As we need the patience of labourers to doe the will of God, so the patience of waiters, to tarry for our answer and reward.

I will wait till my change come.

And one would think *Job* needed not to wait long for that: for, said he not (chap. 10. 17.) *changes and warre are upon me?* *Job* was under perpetual changes, and his were great changes, changes from a prosperous to an afflicted estate, from health to sicknesse, from honour to disgrace, from riches to poverty, and though his afflictions hung long upon him, yet he had changes of affliction: fresh and fresh evils, *changes and war*, or changes of war were against him: as he complained (chap. 10. 17.) God brought fresh armies to charge him every day, and doth he now want a change? and who is there that liveth and doth not change? we change (though not sensibly, yet) in some sense or other every moment. Changes are upon us, changes of time, of place, of condition, and of affection. *Man continueth not*, (saith *Job* at the beginning of this Chapter) we are only constant in changes: what then is the meaning of this desired change?

Man hath three great changes, and they are all three taken in here; according to a threefold opinion about the interpretation of these words.

*Donec veniet
rerum vicissi-
tudo & status
hic meus muta-
tur in melius,
Eold.*

*Aben Ezra ex-
ponit discessus
meus, i.e. donec
hinc migrem, de
morte intelligit
tanquam sim-
plicius, Merc.*

First, Some understand the change for which *Job* waited, to be a change in his outward condition. A change from weaknesse to strength, from poverty to riches, from sorrow to joy, he waited for deliverances from his present evil, and to be re-estated in his former comforts. Though *Job* needed (if ever man did) such a change as this, yet (I conceive) this was not the change for which he promiseth here to wait. But

Secondly, *Till my change come*, that is, till death come. Many both of the Rabbins and others go this way, and judge it the most proper interpretation, *All the days of my appointed time I will wait*, till I die: or, I will live waiting for a change by death; death is a great change, the great change not only of this

this or that man, but of mankind. Death brings a change to all, to good and bad, to beleevers and to infidels, though the change which it brings to these differing persons be as different as their natures. When the Saints die, they have a change, and no change: as a Worthy amongst us once said, when he was ready to die, *I shall change my place but not my company*: I shall have a new house but my old society; The Saints converse with God, they live with God, while they live in the world, they converse with Christ and have communion with the spirit, they converse (among men) chiefly with good men on earth, and with all these they shall converse in heaven, here is no change: yet the Saints have a great change, and a blessed one when they die: they change from all outward evils, all their troubles shall be removed, they change also from spiritual evils, all their corruptions shall remove, there shall not be so much as any sin or any remnant of sin remaining in them, when they remove from hence: here is a happy change: yea, they shall have not only no sin in them, but no temptation without them: no Satan to tempt, as well as no corruption to side with temptation: when wicked men die they have a change too, but it is a miserable change: theirs is a change from evil to worse, from bad to worst of all; They have a change from fading comforts to lasting sorrow: or they have a change from temporary sorrows to everlasting sorrows; *Son, remember* (saith *Abraham* in the parable to *Dives*) *that thou in thy life time hast received thy good things*: thou farest deliciously every day, thou wast cloathed with purple and fine linnen, but see thy change: thou who hadst a table spread and furnished with delicate meats, thou who hadst a cup brimfull, yea running over with delicious wines, now thou hast not so much as a drop of water to cool thy tongue. This is the change which wicked men shall have in death, from pleasure to pain, or from short pains to eternal pain, from a few moth-eaten, worm-eaten, dying, decaying delights, to those griefs which cannot die, to those griefs which as a worm shall gnaw upon their souls and consciences worse then death. Some wicked men are as miserable as they are wicked in this world, *The wicked travel with pain all their days* (chap. 15.) yet they shall travel with greater pain when they die: their present sorrows are but the beginning of sorrows: now they doe but sip of that cup, which they must drink up dregs and all for ever.

Death

Death is a change to all, dying Sains change from bad to good, from good to best: when wicked men die, they change from bad to worse, from worse to worst of all.

Thirdly, This change is interpreted of the resurrection, *Job* desires to die presently, and would wait willingly till the resurrection, knowing that then he should be freed from all affliction; One of the ancients renders it, *I will wait until my holy birth-day come: The resurrection is a birth-day to the world.* The earth and sea shall be in travel and be delivered (he that is raised from death begins a new life) They took dead men into their womb, and shall (by the power of God) return them living. There shall not be one abortive or stillborn in that great birth-day. Some expound that regeneration which Christ speaks of (*Math. 19. 28.*) of the resurrection, and give the sense only with the alteration of a point, thus, *Ye which have followed me, shall in the regeneration (or resurrection) when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.* Which reading *Beza* a learned interpreter affirms, that he hath observed in five ancient copies: implying that when the bodies and souls of the Saints shall be married again together, never to be separated by death, that will be as a new birth-day to them all. However 'tis clear beyond dispute that the resurrection day of Christ is called in Scripture both the day of his begetting, and of his birth. For that of (*Psal. 2. 7.*) *Thou art my son this day have I begotten thee*, is interpreted by the Apostle of the resurrection of Christ, *Act. 13.* where having said (*vers. 30.*) *God hath raised him from the dead*, he subjoins (*vers. 32, 33.*) *And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the Fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again, as it is also written in the second Psalme: Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee.* And that the resurrection of Christ is his birth as well as his begetting is proved by the same Apostle, who calleth him expressly *The firstborn from the dead* (*Col. 1. 18.*) Now as the first birth-day of man into the world is a change: So this second birth-day will be a greater change. As the Apostle disputes it all along (*1 Cor. 15.*) how great a change will that be when mortality shall put on immortality, when corruption shall put on incorruption, when that which is sown a natural body shall be

Hypotesis Jobi quod ira Dei annus gratiae venturus quod statio ipsius & militia certis diebus definita, quod spes fit, quod decessus esset ventura praeabant argumentum magnum resurrectionis meritorum. Tota enim disputatio Jobi eo collimat ut probat in rebus ex ternis non esse signa irae vel gratiae, in hac vita non dari id quod fideles sperant indeoque nihil ipsis convenientius esse, quam anhelare ad mortem. Coc. ἡ ἀνάστασις τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ 70. donec rursus fiat sancta natiuitas mea Sym. Renascitur qui resurgit & ingreditur novum vitae curriculum.

be raised a spiritual body; Hence the Apostle concludes at the 51th verse, *We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed:* which the Vulgar Latine reads thus, *we shall all rise, but we shall not all be changed*, and another, as the learned Beza hath observed upon that place: *we shall all sleep, but we shall not all be changed.* For these not observing that the Apostle in this place speaks only of the bodies of the Elect, and knowing that the bodies of the wicked shall not have (though they shall have some change) such a change as is here spoken of, upon these grounds they have thus boldly altered the text, to serve their own sense: whereas both the Syriake and Arabike interpreters keep to the Original greek, from which we translate, *we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed.* For the Apostle treating of the state of all Saints at the last day, of whom many shall then be found alive, he declares what shall be done to them: *They* (saith he) *shall not sleep*, that is, they shall not die, yet they shall be changed; so that, though some of the Saints shall not be raised because they shall not die, yet all at that day shall finde a change: *We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed.* This is the great change: In the morning of the resurrection we shall all put on fresh suits, fresh suits of flesh and robes of glory upon them, such as shall never change, much lesse wear out, such as shall be fresh, not only as the garments of the Israelites forty years in the wilderness, but for ever. After this change we shall hear no more of changing. And that we shall have such a change the Apostle speaks again, (*Phil. 3. 23.*) *Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like to his glorious body.* The body shall be cast into a more excellent mould, even as a vessel that is broken or out of fashion, is put into the Goldsmiths hand to be changed or new made; yea, there shall be a change at that day not only of the body but of the whole man, the soul shall be changed, not in the substance of it, but in the perfections of it, for then full glory shall be poured into the soul, and it shall have a better estate, though not in the nature of it, yet in the degree of it, then it had before. Then mans glory shall be compleated when soul and body shall meet again, and be reunited: the union of soul and body constitutes man, a soul alone is not man, as a body alone is not; Now in the day of their resposals, what gifts will the Lord bestow? what tokens of his royall bounty? Such gifts, such tokens sure, as will convince

vince man that his change is come, and abundantly recompence all his days of waiting for it.

Again Observe,

That the assured hope of the resurrection to eternal life, will support the soul with patience under all the evils of this life.

Job could willingly undergo any condition, because a change was coming: Though we fight with beasts as long as we live, we have advantage enough in this one truth, *the dead shall rise*, (1 Cor. 15. 31.) what though we endure hardship in this life, we shall arise to a better life. The Authour to the *Hebrews* (chap. 11. 35.) reports the courage and constancy of the Jewish Martyrs upon this account, *They were tortured not accepting deliverance that they might obtain a better resurrection.* But are there two sorts or two degrees of resurrection? one good and another better, that he saith, they looked to obtain a better resurrection?

I answer,

He calls that which they expected a better resurrection, not comparatively to another resurrection, but either first, in comparison of that life which they were to lose, if they would keep the faith; or Secondly, in comparison of that life which they might have kept if they would have let go their faith, or submitted to idolatry. And their life in this latter sense may elegantly be called a resurrection, because they being but as dead men in the hands of those tyrants for professing the faith, were offered their lives again, or should have been restored to a free enjoyment of their lives, if they would have renounced or denied the faith. But these noble professors thought the offer of such a life too vile a price to sell their faith for. And therefore they despised that deliverance which was only a resurrection from a threatned death, to a transitory life, in comparison of that true or better resurrection, which would be from an inflicted death to eternal life. Now if the Saints under the old Testament were thus Heroical in sufferings upon the hope of a future resurrection, about which they had no open direct promise, nor any very clear evidence; how much more should we who have the doctrine of the resurrection written as with a beam of the Sun, together with the glory and the happiness which shall follow? The assurance of a change to any better state, is apt to raise in man high resolutions in any the worst estate wherein he is. And any the hope
of

of mending our condition enables us to bear a bad condition : **hope is the support and pillar of the ſoul, in its heaviest preſſures,** that which adds infinitely to the puniſhment of the damned in hell, is, that as they are in an ill condition, ſo they know their condition will never mend, they cannot ſay *they will wait till their change come*, they muſt ſuffer, but they cannot hope ; Their change ſhall never come, though they ſhould hope for it, becauſe they have no ground of hope, everlaſting wrath is determined upon them. This makes them compleatly miſerable. To be without hope of good, is worſe then the enduring of evil : the damned in hell are more pained with thinking that their miſerable condition will never change, then they are in bearing their preſent miſery. The Saints in heaven are in a happy eſtate, and they know it will never change, they joy as much in this aſſurance, as they do in the ſenſe of their preſent happineſſe : they enjoy all their joies at once, becauſe their joy is one, and ſhall ever be the ſame ; Their condition is ſo good that they need not deſire a change, and ſo ſure, that they need not fear a change. It is the extremity and the height of a good eſtate to be beyond the fear, and of an evil eſtate to be beyond the hope of change : it is an abatement of our comforts, to enjoy good which may be changed for evil, and an abatement of our ſorrows to endure evil which may be changed for good. 'Twas thus with *Job*, he was in a ſorrowfull condition, but he believed a change was coming, and therefore he reſolved. *All the daies of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come.*

JOB Chap. 14. Vers. 15, 16, 17.

Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands.

For now thou numbrest my steps, dost thou not watch over my sinne?

My transgression is sealed up in a bagge, and thou sewest up mine iniquity.

IN the close of the 14th verse, we heard Job resolving to wait all the daies of his appointed time, till his change shall come: and according to the various interpretations of that change, opinions vary about the call and answer of this 15th. verse.

Thou shalt call, and I will answer.

They who interpret that change by death, sence it thus, "when-
ever thou shalt send out thy writ, or summons to the grave, I
shall readily submit unto it and obey: thou shalt call and I will
answer, why should I be slow footed or faint-hearted, when I
am called to the grave? seeing I am assured, that I shall not be
lost in the grave, no nor forgotten there: though the grave be
the land of forgetfulnesse, thy affections towards me will pre-
serve thy memory of me, and seeing I live in thy love, I can-
not live out of thy thoughts: Thou wilt have a desire to the
work of thy hand.
Hence Observe,
That a godly man (in a due frame of spirit) willingly obeys the
call of God to die.

The Apostle had not only a willingnesse, but a forwardnesse to die, even a zeal or a kinde of ambition to die, *I desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, which is best of all.* The Saints receive their call to death as a call to rest, and though the body for a while lie down in the dust, yet they know what is prepared for the soul, and when they two meet together again, both shall be called to an everlasting rest. Some interpret these words of calling and answering, by the common custome of inviting, and of the readinesse of those who are invited, to come unto a feast: How willing are we to feast with our friends? Saints never

*Si me voces me-
rique jubeas
paratus sum
Rab. Moyles.
Quum me vo-
cabit ad mi-
grandum ex
hac vita, ego
tibens tibi re-
sponderem.
Merc.*

never go to a feast indeed till they have done eating : the hunger of the soul after this feast conquers the fear of death. I grant there is a natural fear of death, and 'tis possible that a beleever who (in his own thoughts) hath often acted the dying man, may yet finde some regret and unwillingnesse to die when death comes: the very loosing of the bond, the untying of the marriage knot between soul and body, is unwelcome to nature, while grace bids it welcome. *Paul* did not so much desire to be unclothed as to be clothed upon: he was willing rather that mortality should be swallowed by eternal life, then that natural life should be swallowed up by mortality. Yet at last faith conquers natural fear, grace laughs while nature mourns, and a beleever can with as much chearfulnesse answer the call of God to die, as the call of a friend to dinner when he is hungry, or to bed when he is weary.

Secondly, They who expound this *change* for that of the resurrection, give another meaning of this call and answer. As the former take it for a call to the grave, so these for a call from the grave, and his answer to be a willing return from thence: he would not let God call twice, much less demurre upon the matter, whether he were best come out of the grave or no. *Thou shalt call and I will answer, here I am, Lord, I come.* The Septuagint render *I will obey thy call.* In that day God will call, yea, he will make the greatest call that ever yet was made. *Then our God shall come, and will not keep silence, he shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth that he may judge his people* (Psal. 50. 3, 4.) *In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump, for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed* (1 Cor. 15. 52.) *Ev κηλεύσονται* And again, The Lord himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first, (1 Thes. 4. 16.) he shall descend from heaven with a shout, with a loud exhortation, so loud that all who are in the grave shall hear him: the word in propriety signifies that encouraging voice, which is among mariners, or rowers in a galley, who are called with one consent to buckle to their oars: the Lord shall descend with a shout like that, and rouse the dead at once out of their graves. Bez. In the parable of the Virgins, 'tis said, *at midnight there was a great cry, behold, the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet*

M m m m 2.

him.

him (Mat. 25. 6.) This is not the crie of those who are called, (there will be a cry among them) but a cry from heaven calling them to meet the bridegroom. Christ speaks of two sorts of dead men, and of a twofold call to a twofold resurrection, *Joh. 5. The hour is coming and now is when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live*: These are the dead in sinne, who are called to arise in newnesse of life, or to a new life, the life of grace: *Marvell not at this* (saith Christ) *for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the grave shall hear his voice, and shall come forth, they that have done good to the resurrection of life, and they that have done evill unto the resurrection of damnation.* As a great cry causeth the spirituall resurrection from sinne, so the corporall from the dust. Both are effects of the mighty power of God. When Christ raised *Lazarus*, he spake with a loud voice (*Joh. 11. 43.*) *Lazarus come forth*, *Lazarus* answered this voice and came forth. And as he then, so all mankind shall hear and obey the voice of Christ commanding them to come forth. *God calls now, and few will answer or obey: O that my people had hearkned unto my voice,* (*Pf. 81. 11.*) *God will at last speak so loud and so effectually, that the deafest Adders shall hear the voice of the charmer and appear out of their holes*; The Lord commands the Prophet (*Ezek. 37. 4.*) *Son of man prophesie upon these dead bones*: he means it typically of the Jews in captivity, yet there the resurrection is shadowed: God will prophesie upon our dead bones: And if any ask, Can these bones live? yet these bones shall live. *God will lay sinews upon them, and he will bring up flesh upon them, and cover them with skin, he will put breath into them and they shall live.* Now a gracious heart answereth the call of God in the actings of a spirituall life (*Psal. 17. 8.*) *When thou shalt say seek my face, my heart answers, thy face Lord will I seek*. Then every man gracious or without grace, good or bad, shall answer the call of God to the receiving of another life: a life to some better then that they once lived, a life to most unconceivablely worse then the death from which they are called. *Thou shalt call and I will answer*, that's a second sense.

Thirdly, That change was interpreted by others for a change in his present state, from sicknesse to health, from pain to ease, from sorrow unto joy.

Hence

Hence ariseth a third interpretation of this call of God and answer of *Job*, in reference to a judiciary deception or debate, which *Job* had professed himself willing to abide and carry through with God, in case he would be pleased to grant him that desired change: he spake that desire before; And I finde one interpreter fixing him in it here. *It is manifest* (saith he) *Manifestum est* that *Job* doth not speak here of the resurrection of his flesh, but of *Iobum non lo-* that call and answer for the ending of his present controversie: about *qui de carnis* which we read his offer (Chap. 13.21.) *Withdraw thy hand farre onesed de ea vo-* from me, let not thy dread make me afraid: then call thou and I *catione & re-* will answer, or, let me speak and answer thou me. And so, with *sponsione, de* draw thy hand, is as much as this, change my state, and then I *qua (c. 13. 12.)* will answer thy citation or thy call, and give an account of my *ut present, tem* self, in whatsoever thou shalt demand of me: I have opened *litem dirimat* his mind in this proposall upon those words of the 13th chapter, *esse intelligen-* thither I referre the Reader, *dum, Bold.*

Take only this note from it.

That when the body is unburthened of outward afflictions, and the soule eased of inward sorrows, then we have a great advantage both to plead with and pray to God.

How much the inward man is pressed by the outward, and how the spirituall part of the inward man is pressed by those fears that arise from its carnall part, might be shewed from this exposition, but (though it hath a fairnesse in it, and a learned pen to maintain it, yet) I wave it as not so proper and pertinent as either of the former two, to the scope of this call and answer, which this Scripture leads us to.

Job having promised a readinesse in himself to answer the call of God, shews his assurance of Gods readinesse to call him, and of his acceptance with him.

Thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hand.

It hath been shewed (chap. 10. 3.)

First, That man is the work of Gods hand.

Secondly, In what sense hands are ascribed unto God.

Thirdly, How man is the work of Gods hand.

For the clearing of these particulars in a way of explication, I send the Reader to the chapter and verse fore-cited, and shall deal with this clause only as stands in connexion here with the call and answer last opened.

M m m m 3

Thon

Thou wilt have a desire to the work of thy hand.

Which some conceive to be the very from of words in which Job intended to answer God: *Thou wilt call, and thus I will answer: O God, thou hast or thou wilt have a desire to the work of thy hand.* As if he should say, *When thou callest me, I know thy call must spring from the good will thou bearest me, thy affections will come forth to me, when thy voice comes forth, thou wilt therefore speak because thou hast a desire to the work of thy hand;* so the words stand in opposition to those (chap. 10. 3.) *Is it good that thou shouldest despise the work of thy hand?* Which some expound as his expostulation with God, upon an apprehension that he slighted him: but now he is confident God hath another opinion of him, and would be so far from despising, that he will have a great desire to him who was the work of his hand.

Secondly, Many of the Hebrew writers expound Job, as if he thought God had a minde or a purpose to destroy the work of his hand: and they reade it with an interrogation, *Wilt thou desire or be forward to destroy that which thou hast made?* Hence also the Septuagint render it as a deprecation, *Do not reject or unmake the work of thy hands.*

*Numquid per-
dere desidera-
bis? Rab. Lev.
Tade' ipya
Xē' ipya ov' mē
ano poia. Ne
repellas odera
manuum tua-
rum. Sept.
desidera-
re, anare, hinc
nomen argenti,
quod desidera-
bile est.*

*Operi manuum
tuarum porri-
ges dextram,
Vulg.*

Thirdly, The Originall word which we translate, *Thou wilt have a desire*, imports a strong coveting desire, such as is after silver. The same root in the Hebrew signifies silver and to cover, because silver is so much coveted, *thou wilt have a desire to the work of thy hand.* As a covetous worldling hath a great desire after gold or silver, he longs for it, and it pleaseth him when he can get it, so the Lord himself hath a longing, covetous desire after man, who is the work of his hand. The Lord seemed to use Job as if he were but rubbish and drosse, no way desireable, yet he believed God would look upon him as a silver vessel, and as a vessel of honour: The Vulgar Latine translates wide from the letter of the Hebrew, but near to this sense; *Thou wilt put forth thy right hand to the work of thy hand:* this departs from the letter of the words, but the sense is fair to the scope of the words; for it is an argument of love and friendship, to put forth the right hand to a man, if we meet one whom we love and delight in, we cannot passe him, without taking him by the hand; And is as an argument of love and friendship to salute with the hand, so

of

of charity or pity to reach out the hand : *Thou wilt have a desire,* may be well expressed thus, *thou wilt put forth thy hand to the work of thy hand, and help me up* when thou biddest me rise. A true friend reacheth his heart out before he reacheth out his hand. God had cast *Job* into the mire and ditch (as he spake chap. 9.) yet he beleeveth he would take him by the hand, and lift him not only out of the ditch of affliction, but out of the grave of death.

Hence Observe,

First, *That God bears much affection to man as he is the work of his hand.*

It argued high displeasure when God spake thus against his people, *He that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will shew them no pity* (Isa. 27. 11.) The meanest creature in the world, is the work of Gods hand, and under that notion the desire of his heart : it is natural to all men to love their own works : and it is the distemper of most men to overlove and doat upon, yea to be proud of the work of their hand : God hath a desire to and a liking of all his works, (Gen. 1. 31.) when he had finished that great structure, that noble fabric of the world, *he saw all that he had made*, and he saw it with content. God did not make the world and then take a view of it ; all was one act, yea, he saw the idra or platform of it in his own breast from eternity : but the Scripture speaks thus to shew what price and value he put upon his work. And if the natural frame of man be such as God hath a desire to, and looks upon with delight, as it then came out of his hand in the first creation : what desires hath God to the work of his own spirit in our hearts, which is the second of the new creation ? hath he not a desire to the new creature, who hath a desire to every creature ? if he hath a desire to the work of his power in creation, then much more to the work of his spirit in regeneration, which is the most beautiful peece of work which he ever made. Angels are excellent creatures being confirmed in holiness : the soul of a beleever formed up by grace, is a creature matching Angels. When *Stevens* face was full of beauty, the text saith, it did *shine as the face of an Angel*. If an Angel were corporal, he could not have more lustre and beauty then *Stevens* face had. Every Saint hath a heart like the face of an Angel, full of divine beauties and glorious excellencies. To such a work of God, how great a desire hath God ? *Daniel*
Was

was called a man of desires by the Angell (*chap. 9. 23.*) we translate greatly beloved, but the Chaldee is, *Thou art a man of desires*: Though every beleever cannot be called a man of desires in Daniels height, yet every beleever is a man of desires, A man whom God desires. It is an honour to man to be desired among men (and those Princes died in dishonour, of whom the holy story saith, that they died undesired) but how great an honour is it to that man who lives desired of God, and (whereof Job was assured) to whom God will have a desire as to the work of his hands when he is dead!

Take this corollary from it.

If God hath a desire to the work of his hand, how should they who are the work of his hand have a desire unto him?

What desire should we have to God, who hath wrought us, when we hear that he hath a desire to us because he hath wrought us? shall the potter have a desire to the clay, and shall not that clay (which hath desires) have a desire to the potter? One of the Ancients speaks passionately to this point: *I was made by thee O Lord, and my heart is restless till it return to thee*: the work should have a desire to the hands that made it, and that which hath received a being to the fountain of its being. Sinfull destempers cause us to depart from God, the work hath then no desire to the hand that made it. *Holy actions are all from God, and they carry us back to God, from whom they are. A holy heart cannot but have a desire to God, the work of whose hands it is.*

Thirdly, Job was in a very sad condition, when he spake this, he was pleading with God for a change, a change by death, he will needs die rather then continue such a life; The hand of God had cast him as low as man could be on this side the grave or hell: and he saith, *Thou shalt have a desire to the work of thy hand.*

Hence Observe,

Faith can discern some light of favour, some glimerings of love through the clouds of darkest dispensations.

It is the holy skill, the art of faith to make conclusions of life, in death, and of light in darknesse; This is the right Logick of faith: Faith can prophesie, and faith is a true Prophet, *thou wilt have desire*, he speaks of the time to come, The presumption of evill men prophesies sometimes, or dreams rather that God will

*Gressus sunt
affectus &
actus quibus
animus homi-
nis incedit bo-
nis quidem ad
palmam malis
vero ad pœ-
nam.*

נִמְנָם est nume-
rare vel suppu-
tare. Hinc li-
bellus supputa-
torius.

*Numerare
gressus est stu-
diose aliquem
observare &
omnia ejus fa-
cta inquirere,
quod fere fit
hostili animo.*

Bold.
*Singula facta
mea recenset &
ad amussim
metiris. Jun.*

are his steps; holy actions are streight steps, and sinfull actions are uneven ones, *he went on frowardly in the way of his heart,* Isa. 57. 17. that is, in the way which his heart most delighted in, that was a crooked way, and such were his steps, such disorderly walkers use not to number their own steps, but God doth.

Numbring the steps notes an exact account, and an accurate observation of our actions, we say of a man who goeth softly, *surely you tell your steps,* The Lord is said to number our steps, when he makes a strict inquisition concerning all our transactions, and sets down step by step, every passage of our lives, when he keeps (as it were) a *day-book* of all we doe, and records us to a word or thought. *David* speaks of his enemies, (*Psal. 56. v. 6.*) *they gather themselves together, they hide themselves, they mark my steps, when they wait for my soul:* that is, they mark every thing I doe or say: he that would be watcht exactly were best to have an enemy to watch him: love makes us watchfull over one another, lest we take hurt; but malice makes a man observant enough of another to do him hurt: thus *Dauids* enemies were double diligent upon their watches, *they mark my steps, when they wait for my soul;* And again, *Psal. 17. 11. they compassed us in our steps, they have set their eyes bowing down to the earth.* It is an allusion (as I conceive) to hunters, who goporing upon the ground to prick the hare, or to finde the print of the hares claw, when the hounds are at a losse, and can make nothing of it by the scent. Thus his enemies cast about to finde where he had gone, or what he had been doing, that their bloudhounds might follow the game with a fresh cry. So then, *thou numbreſt my steps,* is no more but this, whatsoever I doe or speak, thou art very curious and criticall in the observation of it; I will not stay in the inlargement of any points from these words, but referre to chap. 10. v. 14. where *Job* speaks the same sense, *If I sinne then thou markeſt me, &c.*

Only Note in passage.

First, *God knows all the motions of our hearts, and the actions of our lives.*

He that is unacquainted with our wayes, cannot number our steps: it is best for us to number our own steps, and to take heed to our own wayes, when we hear that God is so exact at it: it would make us cautious what we do, if we knew of a man who

who took notice of all we did.

Secondly, The person, *Job* was a holy man, whose steps God numbred, whence we may learn,

That God sees the sin of his own children.

Job was not of opinion that God sees no sinne in his children; he knew himself to be a childe of God, and he knew his steps were numbred, yea, and his sin watched over, as he speaks in the next clause.

Dost thou not watch over my sin?

Some render this as a prayer, *Do not keep my sins, or spare me my sins*, that is, doe not punish them: but this is inconsistent with the tenour of *Jobs* discourse, and so I leave it.

The letter of the Hebrew is, *Dost thou not keep or observe upon my sinne?* The sense is the same with what he said last, or we have here but an exposition of it. Some reade it without an intereogation, *Thou watchest over my sinne*, in both there is an allusion to a severe creditour, who gives no day, but presently exacts the forfeiture or penalty of his bond. So the Septuagint render, *None of my sins passe thee*, thou takest notice of all to punish and bring me to judgement for them. Others translate, *Thou dost not wait, or expect at all upon my sin*, As if he had said, as soon as ever thou hast seen one commit any sinne, thou laiest thy arrest and charge upon me, thou dost not give me time but callest me to a present account.

We may here again note, the inspection or superintendency of God over the ways of man: he is so perfect a numberer, that he watcheth to number: he that will number how many steps another takes, had need watch him well. Let no man wonder that God numbreth his steps, when he watcheth to number them: and indeed, it is as easie for God to see every sinne in us, as to see one sin; there is no difficulty to omniscieny, in knowing all things. **Let this also be for our caution and admonition:**

if God watcheth over our sins, how should we watch over our selves? Christ gives this charge, *What I say to you I say to all, watch*: we must watch for our own outward safety, though God watcheth to save, his watchfulness is no plea for our carelessnesse: much more have we need to watch, lest we sin, because God watcheth to observe our sins. **His watchfulness should provoke our carefulnesse.** The Lord (as it were)

N n n n 2

watch-

Parce peccatis meis, Vulg.
Hæc præcatio filo orationis non convenit.
Merc.
שמר
q d excubias agis super peccatum meum
verbum de verbo, Nec custodis super peccatum meum.
Non præteribis te ullum peccatorum meorum
70.
שמר
Verbum pro expectare & differre cum magna parte Hebræorum sumo. Merc.

watcheth advantages to bring evill upon them, who are not watchfull againſt evill (*Dan. 9. 14.*) Therefore hath the Lord watched the evill, and brought it upon us: they were not watchfull againſt the evill of ſinne, therefore the Lord watched to bring upon them the evill of puniſhment. Have not we cauſe to watch leſt we tranſgreſſe, when God watcheth to chaſten our tranſgreſſions? The Prophet *Jer. 20. 10.* complained, *All my familiars watched for my halting*: God (in a ſenſe) watcheth for our haltings. He doth not watch as wicked men doe, with a hope to ſee us halt, as the Prophet perſonates his unkind familiars there, ſaying thus among themſelves, or every man in his own heart, *Peradventure he will be enticed, and we ſhall prevail againſt him, and we ſhall take our revenge on him.* It pleaſeth wicked men to ſee the godly halt or ſtumble, much more to ſee them fall: God is infinitely above ſuch thoughts or deſigns, he watcheth for our haltings to make us know them, not to inſult over us for them. He watcheth for our haltings, not hoping to ſee us halt, but to prevent us from halting, or if we halt, then to preſerve us from falling. He at moſt watcheth for our haltings to correct us for them, not to take his revenge upon us for them. He watcheth us to make us watchfull.

There is a double watchfullneſſe which this ſhould leade us to.

First, A watchfullneſſe in reference to God.

Secondly, A watchfullneſſe in reference to our ſelves.

We ſhould watch. 1. What God doth. 2. What God ſaith. And we ſhould watch. 1. What we doe. 2. What we ſpeak. 3. What we think: Every thought, word and work muſt be accounted for, and brought to judgement: and therefore it is as much our wiſdome, as it is our duty to watch over them. *Thou watcheſt over my ſinne* (ſaith *Job*) And ſuppoſe God find his ſin, what will he do next? that *Job* ſeems to tell us in the next verſe. Our ſins are but traſh, yet *Job* ſuppoſed that God put his into a bagge; they are no treaſure, yet *Job* ſuppoſed, God ſealed up his ſins in a bagge, and leſt the ſeal ſhould not be ſtrong enough, he repreſents God ſowing up this bagge full of ſinne, ſuch were the apprehenſions of this ſorrowfull man.

Verse 17. *My transgressions are sealed up in a bagge, and thou sowest up mine iniquity.*

There are two expositions of these words.

First, That the sealing of transgressions up in a bag, implies the utter removing of transgression: as if they were sealed up never to be seen or brought forth any more: the word is used *Job. 9. 7.* he sealed up the stars; that is, he covers them with clouds and darknesse, or overcomes them with greater light. The clearnesse of the day seals up the stars alwaies, and so doth the cloudinesse of the night sometimes. Some give this sense of the sealing here, *my transgressions are sealed in a bagge*, that is, they are hid, and shall not be remembred at all for ever. *Daniel* Prophecyng of the sufferings of Christ, saith, chap 9. 24. *Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and the holy city to finish transgression:* The Chaldee word is, *to seal up transgression*: what that is, the next words shew, *and to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity*, this was done by the death of Christ. The death of Christ was the death of sin, and when reconciliation is made for sin, the end of sin is made. This is a great Gospel truth, when sin is pardoned, it is sealed up so fast, that *when it comes to be sought for, it shall not be found, and when it is enquired after, it shall not be.*

Elegant Hebraismus pro eo quod est remitti claudere, ut nullo modo eam videre aut tangere liceat. Sigillare peccata est eorum memoriam penitus delere.
Pined.

Yet I conceive it futes not this place, nor answers the subject upon which *Job* still insists, for he is aggravating the dealings of God with him, as severe, *he numbretb my steps*: So that to say *my transgressions are sealed up*, that is, they are pardoned and covered, is an exposition of so great a variation from the scope of *Jobs* discourse, as cannot be admitted in this place. Therefore to clear his meaning I shall offer that sealing is used in three cases.

First, To keep things secret that they may not be seen.

Secondly, To keep things distinct, that they may not be confused.

Thirdly, To keep things safe (as we usually speak) that they may be forth-coming.

When *Daniel* was cast in the Lions den (that he might be safe, not safe from the Lions, but safe, that none should fetch him out from the Lions, that there might be no delusion in the businesse,) 'Tis said *a stone was brought, and laid upon the mouth of the*

*Ausignate cel-
las referte an-
nulum ad me.
Plaut. in
Casin.
Qua fuit illa
priscorum vi-
ta? qualis in-
nocentia? in
qua nihil sig-
nabatur, &
nunc cibi quo-
que & potus
annulo vindi-
cant a rapina.
Plin. lib. 32.
c. 1.*

the denne, and the King sealed it with his own signet, chap. 6. 17.

Seals were antiently put upon chests of goods, especially of their choicest goods. Pliny gives it as an argument of the integrity of the times before him, that then *nothing was sealed up, servants might then* (as we speak of those that are very trusty) *be trusted with untold gold, but now* (saith he) *house-keepers secure their very meat and drink with seals, lest their servants should steal, and embezzle them.* In allusion to this or that other service of the seal, Job saith here, *my transgression is sealed*, as if he had said, my transgression is kept safe, that it may be ready as matter of accusation and charge against me. In pursuance of which sense, some interpret these words as a metaphor taken from sollicitours about law-suits, who carry their papers and bills of inditement sealed up and put into a bagge, which custome is continued at this day. As if Job had said, *my inditement or charge is sealed up in thy bagge, surely thou intendest shortly to proceed to a tryal against me.* When God tels the people of Israel, *their vine is as the vine of Sodom, &c.* he minds them presently, *is not this laid up in store with me, and sealed up among my treasures?* Deut. 32. 34. that is, this evil which you have done, the sins which you have committed, like Sodom and Gomorrhah, are laid up in store with me, and sealed among my treasures, I have taken sure notice of all, and shall bring all forth in due time: you have scattered your sins and wickednesses abroad, but I have gathered and sealed them up. God treasures up mercy for an obedient people, but he treasures up wrath for the rebellious. Or if God should not do it, yet such doe it for themselves Rom. 2. 5. *Despiseest thou the riches of his goodnesse and forbearance, not knowing that the goodnesse of God leadeth thee to repentance? but after thy hardnesse and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thy self wrath against the day of wrath.* As impenitence seals our sins upon us, so it treasures and seals up the wrath of God upon us for our sins. *The iniquity of Ephraim is bound up, his sin is hid* Hos. 12. 13. from whom was it hid? not from the eyes of God (possibly not from the eye of the world) but it is bound up and hid, as reserved to a day of reckoning. It is bound up, not let loose by pardoning grace, it is hid, not with a covering of mercy, but with a covering from mercy, it is hid, not for protection, but (as Job thought his sinne was sealed) for punishment.

My

My transgreſſion is ſealed up in a bag.

Further, This ſealing up in a *bagge* is an elegancy heightning the ſenſe: A man counts or tels over his ſpending mony, but when he ſeals it up in a bag, it is an argument he means to lay it by as a ſtock. A ſtock of mony is not ſcattered about, but put in a bag, and when it is in the bag, it is not only tyed but ſealed up. Thus *Job* ſeems to conceive that God had taken a note of all his ſins, and laid them up till a fit time, to call him to an account about them, and puniſh him for them.

And thou ſoweſt up mine iniquity.

Job proſecutes the ſame metaphor, and hath the ſame mind in this, as in the former part of the verſe.

The words undergo different readings, ſome thus, *thou ſoweſt iniquity to iniquity*, the Original ſignifies to join, or, to make an application of one thing to another, like an artificer who puts peece to peece in any fabrick. In which ſenſe *Job* ſaith of his friends, *Ye are forgers of lies* chap. 13. 4. that is, you curiouſly frame up a lie, or put one lie to another, *Pſa.* 119. 6, 9. *The proud have forged a lie againſt me: ſo, thou ſoweſt iniquity to iniquity*, the iniquity of one year to the iniquity of another, the iniquity of one relation to the iniquity of another: this is a ſowing, or joyning of iniquity. Others thus, *Thou ſoweſt to mine iniquity*, that is, thou ſoweſt the puniſhment of iniquity to my iniquity, thou addeſt affliction to my ſin: *Job* thought God heaped all his ſins upon him together, and with them the puniſhment of all his ſins. Again, *Thou ſoweſt up mine iniquity*, is but an explication of *thou haſt ſealed up my transgreſſion in a bagge*, or, the *bagge* of my transgreſſion is not only ſealed but ſowed.

Hence Obſerve,

A gracious heart looks upon his own ſinnings, as the occaſion of his ſufferings.

He fears there is ſomewhat in deck againſt him. And 'tis a truth, that as God hath a *bottle* wherein he puts the tears of his afflicted people, ſo he hath a *bagge* wherein he puts the ſins of an offending people. God puts none of the ſins of his people in a bag to condemn them, yet he often puts their ſin in a bag to chaſten them. Hence a *godly man is apt to judge all his afflictions as the fruit of his ſins*: and though it was not ſo in *Job's* caſe,

case, yet, he good man put all upon his sin. It is good to judge our selves when we are judged (that is chastened) of the Lord.

*Fallitur hac in
re Jobus, non
essent hæc affli-
ctiones pænæ
peccati sed fidei
probationes
quod Dei con-
silium non sa-
tis intelligebat
Job. Drus.*

Secondly, Though this be a truth in general, yet Job is not to be excused in having such dark thoughts of God, and such black thoughts of himself, That surely God sealed up his iniquities in a bag, and was resolved to afflict him for them. **Job mistook his own condition, and the mind of God towards him in some things, as well as his friends did. God had not sealed up his transgressions in a bag, but he had cast them behind his back. God did not afflict him for the punishment of his sin, but for the proof and exercise of his graces, as hath been shewed all along. The holiest man on earth is subject to mis-conceive the reason why he suffers, as well as the rule of what he should do.**

Thirdly Observe,

That though a gracious heart will not bear the heard censures of others about his sins, yet he is ready enough to censure and accuse himself.

Job did as often confesse his iniquity before God, as he had pleaded his innocency before men. He would not have taken it well at the hands of his friends, if they had told him that God had filled a bag with his transgressions, and that God had sealed it up against a day of account, yet thus he speaks of himself. As his faith appeared little while he thought that God had sealed up his transgressions, so his humility and self-abasement appeared very great in this acknowledgement of his transgression.

*NOT est pec-
catum ex igno-
rantia vel in-
firmitate.*

III. adinla

*est dissentio ju-
sti & injusti,*

YVD quando

*peccatum fit ex
dedignatione*

parendi vel ex

amore licencie.

August. Confe.

Further, Job imployes three words in these two verses about the same thing, the acknowledgement of his sinfulness, 1. Sin, 2. Transgression. 3. Iniquity. These are taken sometimes promiscuously, as was shewed chap. 13. 23. here we may give them a distinct sense.

The First signifies properly a failing through ignorance or infirmity, a stepping out of the way besides our intention, (possibly) against our full resolution.

The second signifies a dissent from, or dislike of that which is just and right.

The third imports rebellion, and prevarication, when we sinne scorning obedience, or judging it a thing below us. One of the Antients confesses of himself, that when he was (in his youth)

youth) admonished by his mother to take heed of sinful ways, and to walk with God, he was ashamed to follow her counsel: This is rebellion indeed, and the height of iniquity; it is bad enough to do ill, but it is worse to be ashamed to do good, worst of all to be ashamed to leave off doing evil. *Job* chargeth himself with sin, transgression and iniquity, not with all of them in their full extent and aggravations, but with all of them in their kind.

Hence Observe,

That a godly man is subject to all sins, even the worst of sins.

Not only to sins of infirmity but of prevarication, not only to sins of ignorance, but to sins against knowledge: he may sin, not only because he cannot discern the rule clearly, but even against a clear rule. There is no sin but a regenerate man may fall into, except that from which no man can be raised, the sin against the holy Ghost. Now as the best discover somewhat in them productive of the worst sins, so God hath discovered himself ready to pardon the worst of sins: if we commit transgression, iniquity and sin, he proclaims himself, *the God pardoning iniquity, transgression and sin*, yea, his nature is infinitely more ready to pardon, then our nature is to sin. We should fear to commit the least sin even a sin of infirmity, but we need not fear whether God will pardon (for he certainly will) more then sins of infirmity, even the greatest sins. And though now not only our iniquities and sins, but even our least transgressions or steppings aside are sealed and sowed up in a bag, yet beleivers shall shortly see all their sins, bag and all thrown into the bottome of the sea, and sinking like a talent of lead or a weighty millstone in those mighty waters of free grace and undeserved mercies.

JOB Chap. 14. Verſ. 18, 19, 20, 21, 22.

And ſurely the mountain falling cometh to nought, and the rock is removed out of his place.

The waters wear the ſtones, thou waſheſt away the things which grow out of the duſt of the earth, and thou deſtroyeſt the hope of man.

Thou prevaileſt for ever againſt him, and he paſſeth, thou changeſt his countenance, and ſendeſt him away.

His ſons come to honour, and he knoweth it not, and they are brought low, but he perceiveth it not of them.

But his fleſh upon him ſhall have pain, and his ſoul within him ſhall mourn.

*Mirum eſt au-
dire Jobum in
melius arumnis
Philophan-
tem. Olymp.*

IN this context Job give us a proof that he had not loſt his Philoſophy, much leſſe his grace in a ſick bed. An interpreter breaks out into admiration, that a man diſtreſſed with ſo many troubles, ſmitten with ſo many ſores, grieved with ſo many pains, could intend his thoughts ſo much about the ſecrets of nature, and the providential tranſmutations of the creature: that he who had been confined ſo long to a chamber, could travel thus in his thoughts for illuſtrations of his own caſe over mountains and rocks, among ſtones and trees, through the windes and waters.

The 18th and 19th verſes are a collection of compariſons for this purpoſe.

The words are plain, but there is much variety of judgement about their ſcope and Jobs intendment in them.

Some conceive that under theſe ſimilitudes he bewails the laſtingneſſe and long continuance of his ſorrows, or rather that he laſted and continued ſo long in his ſorrows: As if he had ſaid, *The ſtrongeſt peeces of the lower world are eaten out by time or forced into a decay by outward violence: mountains and rocks cannot ſtand their ground when the earth ſhakes: The hardeſt ſtones cannot ever contend with the ſmalleſt droppings, nor can the deepeſt roots hold their poſſeſſion againſt an overflowing deluge: all theſe are ſubject*
unto

unto change, when thus assaulted: how is it then that I subsist under so many sorrows, and yet bear such burdens of affliction, who am neither mountain, nor rock, nor stone, nor tree? how is it that I am not wasted and removed by this tempest of thine anger, and quite washed away with these inundations of thy displeasure? Surely if I had been a mountain I might have been pulled down before this time, had I been a rock, these strokes and diggings might have undermin'd me, had I been a stone these continual droppings might have worn me out, and how green and flourishing soever I had been, these floods might long since, not only have discoloured but drowned all my beauty. Thus he argues from the greater to the lesse, if such robustious creatures fall and fail by these accidents, whence was it that he who was but weaknesse had held out so long? how was it that he (almost a dead man at first) did yet live in the midst of so many deaths? Hence

Secondly, Others conceive, that Job under these similitudes renews his old suit to die; As if he had said, "There is nothing so firm, nothing so strongly settled, but must yeeld at last unto corruption, and change its state: therefore let my change come. Let me be removed, for rocks must remove, let me be consumed, for mountains must consume: Stones wear and trees are washed away, let me be worn and wa'sht out of the world, let me passe away and die.

Thirdly, That Job doth here move the Lord to pity him, and hasten his release, suspecting that at the last he might break out into some impatience, or discover uncomely passions: As if he had said, Lord, mountains cannot stand always, and rocks will fail at last; how much sooner may my patience? My strength is not the strength of stones, (as he spake, chap. 6. 12.)

Fourthly, All these similitudes are conceived to aim at the same point, which Job had been upon a little before, namely, to shew that man dying shall return no more to his former state, as was there opened. Death giveth us such a wound as shall never be healed here; it is an irreparable losse of our worldly comforts: This he shadows out by mountains, rocks, stones, trees and fruits of the earth, which are changed and consumed, as if they had never been: Thus in general, I shall now open the distinct parts of these comparifons.

Has similitudines eodem spectare pato quod precedentes de aquis è mari abeuntibus, &c. ad ostendam sc. mortem hominis irreparabilem. Merc.

Verse 18. Surely the mountain falling cometh to nought, and the rock is removed out of his place.

Here are two similitudes, Some reade, surely the high mountain or highest mountain cometh to nought, for the Hebrew word **נפיל** here used signifies not only to fall, but to be very high and great, so high and great, that a man beholding it or looking down from it is giddy and falls for fear. Hence Giants (Gen. 6.) are called **נפילים** *gi-gantes. q.d. Mons editus & gigantous decidet. Lib. Rad.* led *Nephilim*, which properly signifies *Fallers*, not because they fall, but because they make others fall: yea they being so high or men of such stupidious limbs and stature, others seeing them, tremble and fall before them; So here, for the mountain falling, we may reade, the high and huge mountain, the giantick mountain, the mountain above ordinary mountains, as much as the giant is above the ordinary pitch of men; As if Job had said, the highest mountain come to nought, he speaks not of annihilation, but alteration, they moulder and break, they are not what once they were.

נבל proprie significat illum defluxum deciduorum foliorum ex arbore cum marcescunt ex ulso humore.

The word which we translate *cometh to nought*, signifies properly to *wither as a leaf*, or to fall as a withered leaf, when the sap or moisture of the tree goes down to the root, then the leaves fall off. Thus (saith Job) the great mountains, the huge giantly mountains come to nought, they wither, they fall off like leaves in Autumn: the Prophet Isaiah praieith (chap 64. 1.) O that thou wouldest bow the heavens and come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence: by mountains he means the greatest worldly powers, not natural, but metaphorical mountains: yet it is a truth in the letter, for if the Lord do but bow the heavens and shew his power, if he bow the heavens and comes down in the greatnesse of his strength, then the hardest mountains like the liquid waters shall flow down at his presence.

And the rock is removed out of his place.

A rock is harder then a mountain, a mountain: is earth heaped together, but a rock is earth hardned together: but though it be not only a mountain, but a rock, yea, though it be a mountain of rocks, remove it shall.

קטן consenuit

קטן veterascit. Sept.

The word signifies properly to *wax old*, because things that wax old are removing and passing away; Hence the same word signifies

signifies to wax old and to be removed, that's the Apostle description of a thing that waxeth old, (*Heb. 8. 13.*) *that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away*; he speaks to a spiritual point, yet from a maxim in nature. So here, the rock is removed out of his place, is the same with, the rock waxeth old, because that which waxeth old is ready to be removed out of his place. From these two similitudes,

Observe First,

There is no creature so strong or firm, but is subject unto change.

The mountains and the rocks change ordinarily by the power of time, how much more when God contends with them by an extraordinary power? The Prophet *Nahum* speaks this in highest Rhetorick (*chap. 1. 4, 5, 6.*) *he rebuketh the sea, and maketh it dry.* (If any thing keep water, it is the sea, which is the greatest vessel prepared on purpose by God to keep the waters: yet God can lade the ocean with the hollow of his hand and dry, not only a pond or a river, but the sea. *He rebuketh the sea, and maketh it dry.*) *Bashan languisheth and Carmel, and the flower of Lebanon languisheth, the mountains quake at him, the hills melt, and the earth is burnt at his presence, yea the world and all that dwell therein, then who can stand before his indignation, and who can abide in the fierceness of his anger? his fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by him.* *This pcece of Nahums prophecy is a clear commentary upon the text of Job: what can be said more, and nothing lesse deserves to be said, either of the instability of the strongest creatures, or of the omnipotency of the God of strength.* He tosseth the hills like tennis-balls, and cracks the rocks like a nutshell, before him the hills melt, and the foundations of the earth are discovered. The creature will change by reason of its own weaknesse, though God should not exert or put forth his power against it. Every mixt body hath the seed of corruption in it, and therefore must corrupt naturally, though God should not destroy it providentially or judicially: Now if these creatures are changeable in themselves, surely when God changeth them they shall be changed: all creature strength must yeeld to his strength whose weaknesse is stronger then all creatures; If God send out a commission against a mountain, it falls and must come down, if he bids a rock remove, the rock shall be removed: if God say to the winde, blow away

away that mountain, or to a tempest, blow down that rock, it shall be done; stormy windes and tempests go presently upon his errand and fullfill his word. Faith is said to remove mountains, but it is only upon this account, because it engageth the power of God, who alone can doe it.

Secondly Observe, (which is also applicable to the other similitudes.)

That the strongest creatures reade man a lecture of his weaknesse,

When *Job* would shew man his frailty, he sends him to the mountains and rocks, which are the most durable among earthly substances: the weakest creature is an embleme of mans weaknes, and the strongest teacheth him, there is no trusting to his strength. As *Solomon* send the sluggard to the pismire, saying, *consider her ways and be wise*, so we may say to the strong man, to the confident man, to the proud man, to all who think they shall never be removed, go to the mountains, repair to the rocks and be wise, go to the stones which wear away with water drops, go to the trees which are rooted up by a deluge of waters: go to these and learn the vanity and mutability of your best estate, We may learn of that which cannot speak; things insensible may reason the matter with us: they have a voice though not a tongue to tell us what we are, For as the invisible things of God, to wit his eternal power and God head are seen in the things which are made, so the invisible things of man, even his temporal weaknesse and frailty, are seen in the things which decay since their making. The power of God is invisible, and so is much of the weaknesse of man. The constitution of the creature makes the former visible, and the corruption of it makes the latter visible. Every thing that man sees remembers him what he is, and what he must shortly be. And because abundance of caution in this point, is no burthen, *Job* gives further caution: And as I have opened the former, so I shall now these latter instances by which he confirms this truth.

Verse 19. *The waters wear the stones, thou wastest away the things that grow out of the dust of the earth, and thou destroyest the hope of man.*

In this verse we have two similitudes more together with the appli-

application of all the four, in those words, *Thou destroyest the hope of man*, in conjunction with the 20th verse, *Thou prevailsst for ever against him, and he passeth, &c.*

The waters wear the stones.

Waters are soft and liquid, yet they make impression upon that which is hard, and almost impenetrable: it is a Proverbial speech, *water by continual running, or often dropping hollows and dents a stone*. This similitude intimates, that though *Jobs* afflictions had been small or light, whereas indeed they were great and heavy, though they had been but as little drops whereas indeed they were a mighty deluge, yet their long continuance and frequent repetition, would utterly weaken and wear him out at last: *dropping will consume a stone.*

Gutta cavat lapidem. Ovid. lib. 4. de Ponto.

Hence Observe,

That continued and repeated acts though small, produce great effects.

What single force doth not, many doublings of it will. Many lighter blows will kill as well as one great wound. A man may be whipt as well as club'd to death. *He that goes but a little way in an hour goes a great way if he continue going many hours.* A Student in any profession may have got so little learning by one days study, that he cannot perceive he hath got any, yet continuing to study he may attain the highest degree of learning. A beleever findes little or no growth in grace or in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by some one exercise either in prayer or hearing the word, yet by a constant attendance upon the Lord in these duties, he grows to a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullnesse of Christ. Smallest sins lived in (which some do not so much as suspect to be dangerous) destroy the soul, as well as that (whatsoever it is) which is called by this name, *a sin unto death* 1 Joh. 5. 16. The greatest number is made up of conjoined unities. Here a little and there a little, comes to much. The mightiest oak is hewed down, and the strongest wall is undermined by many stroaks of the axe and mattock. A ship may be swallowed up with a multitude of little sands as well as broken upon a rock: you may make a burden of many feathers as well as of one masse of lead. A multitude in any kinde whether of actions, things, or persons, though inconsiderable apart, yet put together

ther or following each other close, will carry all before them, and overcome all difficulties. *The waters wear the stones.*

Thou wastest away the things that grow out of the earth.

Thou wastest] who is that? the antecedent is God himself, *Thou* (O Lord) *wastest away the things*, &c. here *Job* expresseth the supream efficient of all those alterations in the creature, who it is that puls down the mountains, that removes the rocks, all these changes are wrought by the power of God, *thou wastest away the things that grow out of the earth*, or, *thou bringest a deluge upon them*. God brought once an universal deluge, which washed away not only all that grew out of the earth, but all that lived upon the face of the earth. God hath given mankinde his covenant, and set his bow in the cloud as a sign of it, that all flesh shall not be cut off any more by the waters of a flood, neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth, (Gen. 9. 11.) yet God hath often since brought floods upon particular places and countrys, which have destroyed and washed away that which grows upon the face of the earth, as hearbs, grasse and trees.

גִּמְלוֹת *germi-*
na Pag. *spons*
nascencia Va-
rab. *Quæ spon-*
te fundit pulvis
terra. Com-
p. ut.

The word strictly taken signifies only those things which grow naturally out of the earth without the labour of man, without plowing, digging, or sowing. So we finde the things that grow out of the earth distinguished (1 Kin. 19. 23.) *This shall be a sign to thee, thou shalt eat this year such things as grow of themselves, and the second year that which groweth of the same, and the third year ye shall plant and sow*: The Levitical Law mindes us also of this distinction, (Lev. 25. 5.) *that which groweth of its own accord of thy harvest thou shalt not reap*. As the Jews were forbidden to sow their field in the year of Jubile, so also to reap that (as a peculiar crop to any one of them) which grew up without their sowing. The standing corn (if it stand too long) sheds some grains, which spring up without plowing or sowing: This is said to grow of its own accord; yet (I conceive) we need not take it here in such a restrained sense, but in general, for all or every thing that groweth out of the dust of the earth, whether by or without the labour of the husbandman: *Thou wastest away the things that grow out of the dust of the earth.*

Hence Observe,

First, *The same thing may be both a blessing and an affliction.*

Things

Things grow out of the dust of the earth, by water flowing out of the earth, or by the rain falling upon the earth from heaven, and yet the falling of the rain, and the flowing of the water, may destroy the things that grow out of the dust of the earth: if the rain fall not on the dust of the earth, nothing will grow. God threatens to make the rain of the land powder and dust (*Deut. 28. 24.*) that is, to send so much drought, that the dust shall rise from the earth up into the air, and fall down upon the earth in stead of rain. Now when the rain is dust, nothing will spring out of the dust of the earth. The earth is barren, The earth opens its mouth, and gapes to heaven for rain (as a thirsty man) to make it fruitful: yet, this water, this rain which sometimes is a great blessing to the earth, and causeth it to bring forth fruit abundantly, even this destroyes the fruit of the earth: *too much of any thing in nature is hurtful*: there may be a too much of nature, but there cannot be a too much of grace: some things are so good that we cannot have too great a quantity of them. The dewes and drops of heaven upon the soul in greatest abundance will not destroy the things that grow in or out of our souls, but make them grow more. Our sin and the wrath of God turn our greatest worldly comforts into curses: but that is alwaies a blessing to us which cures us of our sin, and the more we have of it, the more blessings we alwaies have.

Secondly Observe,

The Lord who makes things to grow out of the earth, makes them wither.

He who giveth us the fruit of the ground, takes the fruit of the ground away: mercies and judgements come from the very same hand, and both from the hand of God; The Lord saith to the fields, encrease and multiply: his word, yea, his steps drop fatnesse. Where God walketh in mercy, every step he sets is a drop of fatnesse, and where he walks in anger, every step he sets is a drop of leannesse; he that makes the fields flourish, makes them droop, *he washeth away the things that grow out of the dust of the earth.*

Thou destroyest the hope of man.

As if he had said, *Thou who causest mountains to fall, and rocks to consume, thou who causest stones to wear, and wastest away the*

P p p p

things

things that grow out of the earth, thou, even thou deſtroieſt the hope of man: that is, in deſtroying theſe things, thou deſtroieſt the hope of man, or, as thou deſtroieſt theſe ſtrong durable and beautiful creatures, ſo the hope of man ſet upon any creature. The Hebrew particle (*Vau*) is often put as a note of likeſſe, *And thou deſtroieſt*, is, ſo thou deſtroieſt the hope of man.

But ſhall the hope of man be deſtroied? what hope, and whoſe hope ſhall be deſtroied? There is a hope of man ſtronger then the mountains, and more durable then rocks or ſtones. Though theſe conſume and come to nought, yet that ſhall not. The hope of the Saints endures for ever, and they ſhall never be aſhamed of their hope: their hope is an anchor (ſo the Apoſtle calls it, *Heb. 6.*) ſure and ſtedfaſt: and as the hope of the Saints is a ſure anchor, ſo it is faſtened by ſuch a cable as will never crack, let the winds blow and the waves riſe as high as they will. The word of promiſe is the cable which holdeth this anchor, that word of promiſe is ſtronger then a threefold cord, and cannot at all be broken.

Again, as this anchor is ſtrongly faſtned above, ſo it is let down upon and is faſtened in a rock beneath. That anchor of hope will never dragge which ſals into Chriſt, the cliſts of that rock hold it and will not let it goe. *It is impoſſible to deſtroy ſuch a hope as this: The hope of Saints ſhall indeed be deſtroied, or perfected rather, by enjoyment, but it ſhall not be deſtroied by diſappointment.* When we enjoy all things, what need we hope for any thing? hope is ſwallowed up in fruition. *Saints never loſe their hope till they have found all that they hoped for: If in this life only we had hope in Chriſt, we were of all men moſt miſerable,* 1 Cor. 15. 19. We ſhall not hope any longer then we live here, but we have a hope of good beyond this life: our hope laſteth no longer then our lives, but the things we hope for, laſt longer then the mountains, yea, longer (as old *Jacob* ſpeaks in his benediction upon *Joſeph*) then the *everlaſting hills*: our hope will laſt, that is, we have hope of that which will laſt as long as everlaſtingneſſe.

Seeing then the hope of Saints is no periſhing hope, whoſe hope doth *Job* mean, when he ſaith, *Thou deſtroieſt the hope of man?*

He means the hope of vain men, or the vain hope of good men.

men. God deſtroieth all the hopes of vain men, and all the vain hopes of any man, ſuch hopes as thoſe proud men had after the flood ſhall be deſtroied, who ſaid, *go to, let us build us a city and tower whoſe top may reach unto heaven, and let us make us a name, leſt we be ſcattered abroad upon the face of the earth.* (Gen. 11. 4.) God ſcatters their hopes, who by worldly power or policy, hope to ſecure themſelves againſt ſcattering: a hope to get our ſelves a name, and ſo to falſten our ſelves upon earthly foundations, as never to be removed, ſhall ſurely be removed. The Pſalmiſt diſcovered that the inward thoughts of covetous men are, *that their houſes ſhall continue for ever, and their dwelling places to all generations* (Pſal. 49. 11.) this is their thought and hope: God deſtroieth ſuch hopes often, letting their houſes fall to the ground before themſelves fall into the grave: or if their outward glory outlive them, yet their poſterity ſhall outlive their glory, their ſons ſhall either wantonly ſcatter what they have miſerably gathered, and at laſt be eaten up with wants, or the wrath of God will ſcatter what the father gathered, and the ſon hath minde enough to keep. And as God deſtroies the hope of covetous men, that their riches ſhall abide, ſo the hope of voluptuous men, that their pleaſures ſhall be renewed: ſuch a hope the Prophet *Iſaiah* deſcribes, the idle, idol ſhepherds full of (*Iſa. 56. 12.*) when they ſay, *come ye, and I will fetch wine, and we will fill our ſelves with ſtrong drink, and to morrow ſhall be as this day and much more abundant.* The hoped for cup ſhall be pulled from their mouths, who do not drink for thirſt, but thirſt for a drinking.

Further, God deſtroieth all their hopes who *hope in the arm of fleſh*. The Jews thought *Egypt* help enough againſt all enemies, even while they neglected to keep God their friend. But ſee how the Propheet reproves them or befools them for it: *Why gaadeſt thou about ſo much to change thy way?* As if he had ſaid, When one worldly means fails thee, thy reſort is to another: if *Aſſyria* help thee not, thou art confident that *Egypt* will, but thou ſhalt be aſhamed of *Egypt* as thou waſt aſhamed of *Aſſyria*. That is, theſe hopes ſhall fail thee, and thy expectations, they ſhall be fruſtrate in the one as well as in the other. For God hath rejected thy confidences, and thou ſhalt not proſper in them, (*Jer. 2. 36, 37.*) Thus God deſtroieth the hope of vain men, and not only ſo, but

He destroyeth also the vain hopes of good men ('tis possible for such to have vain hopes) hopes of long life, of prosperous daies, of riches, and of great things for themselves: They sometimes project as vainly as the world, and join with those in action, from whom they are separated by profession. The Lord in mercy blasteth these hopes of good men, that they may be taught to fix their hopes on better things. He shews how weak and withering the creature is, though in their hands, that their hearts may be wholly set on him. *We enjoy God most, when we hope least in man, and God doth therefore destroy the vain hopes of some men, that they may enjoy himself more.* As all the hope of hypocrites shall be destroyed; so shall some hopes of those who are sincere.

Thou destroyest the hope of man, that is, in destroying those things upon which man hopes, thou destroyest the hope of man: the act or habit of hope is often put for the object of it. Man hopes in mountains material and metaphorical, he trusts in the rocks and stones of the earth, or in the things that grow out of the earth, riches and plenty. All these things are destroyable, and when these are destroyed, the hope of most men is destroyed: if the matter upon which our hopes are fixed be perishing, our hopes shall perish: we cannot raise a safe or a firm building upon a rotten or an unsound foundation. Earthly things, the mountains of the earth cannot make a pillar to prop up the hope of man, when God will pull it down.

I have from former passages in this book shewed how great a possession hope is, and that even the light of nature in some hath preferred it before all their possessions. I have also shewed that it is the last peece which man quits the possession of in his greatest extremities, and that when that's gone, all is gone. Man hath nothing more to be destroyed, when once his hope is destroyed: if our hope be prevailed over, we are prevailed over for ever: *Jobs* discourse leads us to this conclusion in the next verse.

Verse 20. *Thou prevailest for ever against him, and he passeth, thou changeest his countenance, and sendest him away.*

This verse explains the application of the similitude, when the Lord destroyeth the hope of man, he prevaileth against him for ever.

Thou

Thou prevaileſt for ever againſt him, and he paſſeth.

Thou prevaileſt] The word is, *thou waxeſt ſtrong upon* וְהָיָה לְךָ כֹּחַ *him, or, thou art ſtronger then he: all prevailing proceeds* *prævalebis ei* *from greater ſtrength, either of body or minde: equality makes* *Mont fortior* *no conqueſt. And though (as Hannah ſings 1 Sam. 1. 9.) by* *eo fuiſti. Pagn.* *ſtrength ſhall no man prevail, yet the ſtrength of God will pre-* *vail. The reaſon why no man prevails by ſtrength, is, becauſe* *God alone hath more ſtrength then all men put together, and* *becauſe he hath, therefore he can prevail by his own ſtrength* *over man, and that for ever.*

Thou prevaileſt for ever againſt him.

The word which we tranſlate *for ever*, ſignifies alſo in the וְלֹא יִכְלֶה *quod eſt* *verb to prevail, to triumph, or to overcome, thou waxeſt ſtrong* *triumphare* *over him triumphingly and victoriously, or, thou triumpheſt* *aut vincere i-* *over him, and thou ſhalt alwaies triumph over him. A triumph* *demefi quod a-* *is the ſignal of perfect victory, and where victory is perfect, it* *liquid ad finem* *is victory for ever: God prevails ſo over man that he may tri-* *victorioſe &* *umph, and therefore he is rightly ſaid to prevail triumphantly,* *triumphanter* *or to prevail for ever.* *perducere.*

Thou prevaileſt for ever, which may be underſtood two waies.

First, That, man is ſo prevailed upon, that, he cannot repair himſelf again. If God break down, man cannot build up, and if he wound, man cannot heal: both breach and wound muſt continue for ever, unleſſe the ſame hand that made them make them up again.

Secondly, That, how often ſoever God taketh man in hand, he is ſure to carry the day againſt him, *he prevaileth for ever.* God is alwaies armed with ſufficient ſtrength to ſubdue all ſtrength unto himſelf. Nor can we ſurprize God or come upon him, before he hath drawn out his ſtrength and made it ready. He muſt be a perpetual Victor or Triumpher who hath alwaies ſtrength enough to get the Victory, and whoſe ſtrength is alwaies ready enough to go to battle. There was never any man alwaies a conquerour, but God is. Men have been mighty conquerors, and have had conquerour juſtly affixed to their titles, yet not one of theſe was alwaies a conquerour, the beſt of men have been ſometimes worſted, or could not prevail; Only God

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prevaileth ever. If he undertake a work or a design, whether for or against man, he will be sure to have his ends: for nothing can stand in his way. All that is in the way is of his own setting, and he is wiser then to set any thing in his way, which shall hinder him in the bringing about his own ends. What strength soever the creature hath, it hath from God, and surely he hath not given out more then he keeps to himself. He will not be mastered with his own gifts, nor make derivative power too strong for original power. Indeed all the power which God gives is weaknesse, and the wisdom folly, compared with that he keeps: and what is weaknesse to omnipotency? what is folly to wisdom? what is mortal and changeable to eternal and unchangeable, that it should hinder its prevailing?

Roborasti eum paululum, ut in perpetuum transieret.
Vulg.
-- tolluntur in altum,
-- ut lapsi graviores ruant.

The Vulgar reads differently, referring this act of prevailing, not to the strength of God prevailing over man, but to the bounty of God giving man strength to prevail: *Thou hast strengthened him for a little while, that he might passe away for ever.* As if God exalted man only to cast him down with a more fearfull ruine: or, as if Job had said, *Thou didst heretofore strengthen me, but now thou abatest my strength; I was once set up, but now thou tramplest me under foot.* 'Tis I grant the design of God against his enemies to advance them on purpose that he may overthrow them with greater advantage. Thus the Lord said of Pharaoh, *for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee,* (Rom. 9. 17.) But God deals not thus with his own servants, for though he gives them strength and then tries them, yet he never gives them strength that he may (with a greater reputation to his own strength) triumph over them. And therefore I lay this translation aside, and embrace our own, as clearest to the intendment of these similitudes: *thou prevailest for ever against him,*

And he passeth.

That is, he dieth, so the word is used (*chap. 10. 21.*) death is our passage out of the world, we come in and we passe out: man must passe when God giveth him a passe to travel out of the land of the living.

Thou changeest his countenance, and sendest him away.

This change of his countenance is taken three waies.

First,

First, Some understand it of the habit of a dying or dead man: Death brings a change upon the whole man, especially upon the face or countenance: both the beauty and the feature of the face change at the appearance of death: fairnesse is then turned into palenesse, sweetnesse into swarthyneffe. The nostrils are sharp, the eyes hollow, the ears are thrunk, and the jaws fallen: the dead man looks not like himself, not like the man he was, when he was healthy and alive. Physicians give us the description of that change, and teach us to spell the letters, and reade the characters of death printed upon the face. Death sends its image as a harbinger to take up every room of our bodies, before it self comes to lodge in our bodies. Standers by may see death in their sick friends, long before their sick friends feel it.

Nitidum & vividum vultum cum ludo & pallente commutat.

Merc.

In morte tota facies redditur sibi contraria.

Acutus enim fit nasus, oculi cavi, tempora collapsa aures contractæ, &c. ut docet. Hipp.

lib. prænot.

Hence Observe,

Death defaceth the beauty and doth blast the comeliness of man.

How much soever any glory in the beams of beauty now, sickness will shortly eclipse and death will totally darken it. Spiritual beauty will never change, but for the better: the countenance of the soul adorned with grace changeth into glory, when a believer dies: Soul-beauty will be more beautiful, and attain its full perfection; when bodily beauty is none at all, but is turned into corruption: when the frame of nature is ruined in us, the frame of grace shall be compleated in us; And we shall be all glorious within, when there is no glory left without. *Thou changest his countenance.*

Secondly, *This change of the countenance* is expounded not for that instantaneous change, which death brings into the body, or not for that only, but for that continual change which man is subject to in his body while he lives: the countenance is put for the whole outward man. Death is our most remarkable change, but it is not all our change: Every day carries away some spoils of beauty and strength from the strongest and most beautiful body. No day looketh upon us or we upon it with the same face.

Nulla non dies formosi spectulum corporis abstulit. Sen. in Hypol.

Mibi friget iste sensus, melius omnino hanc

faciem interpretari possumus generalem suarum rerum statum. Bold.

Thirdly, Others take the countenance more largely, not for the face or whole body only, but for the whole state of a man: it is usual to apply the word *face* or *countenance* to all changes: we say *there is a new face of things*, or of affairs, when affairs whether

per-

personal or publick are much changed. As if he had said, *Thou changeſt his whole ſtate and ſendeſt him away: becauſe all changes appear in the face, therefore in whatſoever our change is, 'tis ſaid our face is changed.*

Man hath one face in riches, and another in poverty, one in honour, another in diſgrace: The copy of a mans countenance changeth, not only as his body, but as his condition and relations change. You may ſee how it is with us in our faces: For, as our conditional countenance changeth, ſo doth our personal. I was ſhewed at the ſecond verſe of this chapter, that man continueth not in any condition alwaies the ſame: his natural, his civil, his ſpiritual eſtate, are liable unto changes: what they are, I refer the Reader back to the verſe mentioned; *Thou changeſt his countenance,*

And ſendeſt him away.

*Ablegas eum
hinc non redi-
turum, velut
extrudis & a-
mandas eum
ex hoc ſeculo
prorſus. Merc.*

He ſaid before, *he paſſeth away*: here he varies the phraſe, *thou ſendeſt him away*, that is, he dieth, there's the end of all. Man hath many changes while he lives, and ſhortly he muſt change from life to death: the manner of expreſſing it is conſiderable.

Thou ſendeſt him away.

Man dieth by diſpatch from God, God ſends him a writ to die, Thou ſendeſt him away. Death is mans diſmiſſion out of the world. The word imports a ſpecial direction, When Adam had ſinned the Lord God ſent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground, from whence he was taken, (Gen 3.23.) He bid Adam be gone out of the garden, and he bids the ſons of Adam be gone out of the world. Old Simeon ſaid, *now let thy ſervant depart in peace, give me my diſmiſſion or my writ of eaſe.* God ſends wicked men away whether they will or no: Saints would be ſent away and depart with leave. Wicked men are put out of the world, as the leprous perſon was put out of the camp of *Israel*, leſt he ſhould infect others. Godly men are ſent out of the world, when they have done the errand they came about for the good of others. *Thou ſendeſt him away.*

Verſe

Verse 21. *His sons come to honour and he knows it not, they are brought low and he perceiveth it not.*

His sons come to honour.

Some refer it to number, *his sons are multiplied*, others to riches, *his sons get wealth*, we to greatnesse, *his sons come to honour*. Some are born to honour, and others come to it, some receive it from their parents, others get it by their achievements, it runs to some in their blood, others rise to it by their vertue and worth, by their parts and abilities: 'Tis better to get honour then to have honour, and to make our selves honourable, then to be made honourable. It is easie to inherit honour, but it is hard to attain honour. *His sons come to honour,*

Cum multi fuerint filii ejus nescit sin autem pauci fuerint ignorat, Sept. כבד pondus & gravitatem hinc honorem divitias, &c. denotat.

And he knows it not.

An act of knowledge is often put for an act of the affection: we are said not only not to know that which we are ignorant of, but that which we are regardlesse of: so here, he knows not when his sons come to honour, that is, he is not affected with it; Usually a parent knows nothing more, then the preferment of his children, and he seldom studies any point more. *Job* describes a father ignorant or insensible of his sons preferment. And as he knows not the good which his sons come to, so not the evil which comes upon his sons, as he tels us in the next words.

And they are brought low, or diminished.

They are diminished in number, but few are left: or, they are made low and poor in state, there is but little left to them.

And he perceiveth it not.

That is, he is not grieved at it; But who is this insensible ignorant father? or what is it that renders him thus ignorant and insensible, of all the providences of God, whether good or bad to his own bowels?

Some expound both clauses of a dead father, *thou sendest him away*, he dies, and then *his sons come to honour*, and he knoweth it not, &c. A dead man hath no knowledge at all of what is done among the living: They that are out of the world perceive not what is done in the world, no not with those that are nearest

and dearest to them, their own sons; And as they have no knowledge of, so no affections to the world, the dead neither rejoyce with nor mourn over those that live. *Solomons* description of an Atheist, and of his false conceits about death, may (though not in his sense) be applied for the illustration of this truth (*Eccl. 9. 5, 6.*) *The living know they shall die.* Atheists speak thus, not from a certainty of knowledge causing them to prepare for death, but from a carelesse mixed with their knowledge, causing them to slight death: they know they must die, and therefore care not though they die. Death (say they) befalls all, and therefore should not trouble any. This is all the care they take about death, when they professe their knowledge of death. *The living know they shall die, but the dead know not any thing.* The Atheist speaks it downright, as if when a man dies there were an end of him. He knows no more, that is, (in their divinity) he is no more. But though the dead in Christ know many things, they know their own happinesse and eternal life; and though the dead who die out of Christ know many things, they know their own torment and misery, they know also the falsenesse of this opinion, that the dead know nothing: yet there is a truth in what they say, though not in what they mean. For the dead know not any thing of this present life, or of the things done here on earth. They know not any thing of these things, as knowing is taken for apprehending, and they know nothing of them, as knowing is taken for grieving at, or rejoycing in them; so the Preacher speaks at the sixth verse, in the language of his Atheist still: *also their love, and their hatred, and their envy is now perished, and they have no more portion for ever in all that is done under the sun.* They therefore have no love nor hatred, nor envy about those things that are doing under the Sun, because they have no portion in all that is done under the Sun. When man dies he hath a portion, but it doth not lie under the Sun. Wicked men have their portion with hypocrites and unbelievers. The godly have a portion with Christ; and all the Saints in glory: as for earthly things they are none of their portion, and therefore none of their care, and they have as little affection about them as they have use of them, their sons come to honour and they rejoyce not, their sons are made low and they grieve not. The Prophet *Esay* praises earnestly (*chap. 63. 16.*) *Look down (O Lord) from heaven, and behold from the habitation of thy*

thy holinesse and of thy glory, where is thy zeal and thy strength, the founding of thy bowels and of thy mercies towards me? are they restrained? Doubtlesse thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not: that is, as some expound the place to the point in hand: Though Abraham and Israel our forefathers are so far from being able to relieve and deliver us out of our troubles, that they are utterly unacquainted with them, yet we are assured thou knowest what our troubles are, and art able to relieve us. Though Abraham and Israel our deceased forefathers have no zeal, nor any founding of bowels, that is, pity and compassion towards us their bowels, though they are not grieved because we are made low, yet Lord, thou livest for ever, and so do thy zeal and compassions to thy people, therefore look down from heaven and help us. There is another exposition of the Prophet, which gives the sense as a prevention of an objection against the former petition; why should you expect to be heard though you are the children of Abraham and Israel, when your walk is so unanswerable to that of Abraham and Israel, that if they were alive again here upon the earth, they would not own nor acknowledge you as their children? To this the Prophet is conceived to answer, let it be granted or confessed that we are a people so degenerate that even our forefathers, if they were sent among us from the dead, would not own us for their children, let it be granted that we are unworthy in our selves to be counted Abrahams children, yet through thy free grace we may be numbred among thy children. Doubtlesse thou art our Father though Abraham be ignorant of us. Thy love changes not though the love of men doth, thou wilt not cast us off though Abraham do: This is a very spiritual interpretation, nor is it inconsistent with the former, we may join both together thus, If Abraham were alive he (possibly) would neither own nor help us, we are so sinful: But Abraham is dead, and doth not so much as know that we want help, therefore Lord look down from heaven and help us thy self: Abrahams bowels are not moved towards his sons, O let not thine be restrained.

Let this admonish parents who take inordinate and immoderate care, by right or wrong to advance their children: Some live miserably that their children may flourish, yea, not a few have destroyed their own souls, that their children might be great and rich when they were dead: what a pitiful delign is this!

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thou ſhalt not rejoice in the grave that thy ſon is rich, neither ſhalt thou grieve for thy ſon that he is poor, when thou ceaſeſt to be among men: for as thy knowledge is periſhed, ſo thy love, thy envy, thy ſorrow are periſhed as to the creature here below. A ſons preferment is nothing to the deceaſed father, therefore let not fathers venture their conſciences and hazard their ſouls to prefer their children: be not anxiously afraid, that when you are dead your children may be poor, this trouble will never come near your heart when you are dead. God promiſed *Joſiab* (2 Kin. 22.20.) *I will gather thee unto thy fathers, and thou ſhalt be gathered into thy grave in peace, and thine eyes ſhall not ſee all (that is, not any of) the evil which I will bring upon this place:* As if he had ſaid, I am reſolved as I have decreed, to bring evil upon this place, but it ſhall be no grief to thee, for thou ſhalt firſt be taken out of this place; And when the Prophet *Iſaiah* brought *Hezekiah* a ſad meſſage, *Behold the days come that all that is in thy houſe, and all that thy fathers have laid up in ſtore until this day ſhall be carried to Babylon, and of thy ſons that ſhall iſſue from thee, which thou ſhalt beget, ſhall they take away, and they ſhall be Eunuchs in the palace of the King of Babylon* (Iſa. 39. 6, 7.) Then ſaid *Hezekiah* to *Iſaiah*, good is the word of the Lord, which thou haſt ſpoken: he ſaid moreover, for there ſhall be peace and truth in my days: he ſpeaks not ſlieghtingly of the evils to come; *Hezekiah* was far from the ſpirit of that Roman Emperor, who ſaid, *When I am once dead, let heaven and earth mingle, what care I what becomes of the world when I am once out of it?* *Hezekiah* was not a man of this temper, yet it was ſome abatement of thoſe evils to him, that they ſhould not come till he was paſt feeling them, or being ſenſible of them. The reaſon which the Prophet gives, why God takes good men out of the world ſometimes, is, becauſe he knows a ſtorm is coming, and he would not have them overtaken with it, and therefore he houſes them before it come, *Iſa. 57. 1, 2.* *The righteous periſheth and no man laieth it to heart, and merciful men are taken away, none conſidering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come:* the evil to come is no hurt to them when they are gone. This is Gods deſign though few conſider it: And as they who are taken away, have no feeling of the evils to come, ſo no fellow-feeling, there is no ſympathy in heaven, Saints are not troubled there at the troubles of any here on earth. It is a grace while we are here, to be troubled at the troubles of others, and it is our pri-

*Me mortuo
miſceatur igni
terra. Calig.*

priviledge, that in heaven we shall not. The Authour to the Hebrews exhorts us, *to remember those that are in bonds as bound with them, and them that suffer adversity, as being our selves in the body:* (Heb. 13. 2.) 'Tis our being in the body which makes it either a duty or possibility for us to partake in the sufferings of other men.

We may hence confute the popish doctrine and practice of praying to Saints departed. When they are sent away, they know neither our spiritual nor our temporal estate, why then should we pray to them about either? The Saints cannot see from heaven to earth, nor can they hear from heaven to earth, 'tis God whose name is *the God hearing prayers*, and therefore to him *shall all flesh come*: if all flesh are obliged to come to him, where is our warrant to come to Saints departed? and if we doe, where is our hope to receive their help, when they are ignorant that we want help? *though we are made low, they perceive it not.*

A second interpretation tels us, that *Job* speaks not here of a man in the state of death, but of a man about to die, or upon his death-bed: such a mans *sons come to honour and he knoweth it not*, and then we must expound *knowing* in the second sense, for regarding or being affected with what we know. *Great personal afflictions make us forget all worldly relations, together with the comforts and sorrows which attend them.* A sick man, especially a dying man, takes no pleasure in his life, and is usually so busied with his own pains that he takes little or no notice of the pain or pleasure of others. A man in such a condition can hardly be perswaded to take in spiritual comforts, or to refresh his soul with a taste of that sweet wine, with a morsel of that marrow and fatnesse which the promises of eternal life present unto him, much lesse can he delight himself in sensitive, least of all in sensual objects. Come, and tell him his sons are advanced and his estate thrives, he regards it not, alas (saith he) I am going out of the world, what's all this to me! Mr. Broughtons translation answers this sense with much clearnesse: *Only his flesh is grieved for it self, and his soul will mourn for himself*, as if he had said, his own grief will spend out all his possibilities of grieving, he will have none in store to bestow elsewhere: Our sons are our own flesh and bloud, and if any thing would affect a man, it would be to hear of his sons, and if any thing concerning his sons would affect him, to hear of their welfare or affliction would. How do parents rejoyce when their sons come to honour, how are they afflicted when their sons are made low! As

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our sons are our own, so we reckon upon their good or evil, upon all the occasions of their joy or sorrow as our own. Our children are our selves multiplied, and (in a sense) immortaliz'd: and love to our children, is but one degree in nature removed from that of our selves. Yet a time is coming when our sons and our daughters about whom we have had so many joys and sorrows, for whom we have laid out so many thoughts and cares, even these shall not have either our joy or sorrow, our thought or care. It was an argument of the wonderful love of Christ, as some of the Ancients observe upon this place, that when he was nail'd to the crosse ready to die, he (as it were) forgot his own sorrows and grievous sufferings, and remembred his relations (*Joh. 19. 25.*) he said to his mother, *woman, behold thy son*, and to the disciple, *behold thy mother*. Now was *Simeons* prophecy fullfilled upon the blessed virgin, *yea, a sword shall pierce thorow thy own soul also*, *Luk. 2. 35.* And therefore Christ applies these comfortable words, as a salve to her wounds, even while his own were bleeding unto death: *Woman, behold thy son, disciple, behold thy mother*. He calls her *woman*, and not mother, not as unwilling to own her for his mother, but either as fearing that such an owning her, might have created her further trouble, or as shewing that being ready to die and return to his father in heaven, he was above earthly relations, and knew none after the flesh, no not his own mother. And yet though he was not only above, but leaving his mother, he leaves her to the care of his beloved disciple. And that remembrance which Christ at his death expressed to his mother, in committing her to a disciple, the same he had expressed a little before to all his disciples, *yea*, and to all beleevers both in committing them to his father when he was gone, and by telling them that he was but gone (as a har-binger) to take up lodgings, and prepare a place for them; assuring them also that in his absence he would send the spirit, who should (with advantage to them) make up the want of his bodily presence. And lastly, that himself intended to return to them again, he would now send one to them, but hereafter he would not send a messenger for them, but come himself, that where he should be there they might be also. Was not the love of Christ to his children stronger then death, when he thus remembred and took care of them, both in the approaches and in the agonies of death? earthly parents may neglect both the *wo* and *welfare* of their children, but Christ will not: surely he will not do it now, when

when his flesh upon him is cloathed with glory, and his soul within him is filled with joy, for he did not when his flesh upon him was full of pain, and his soul within him did mourn; which is the reason or excuse rather which Job gives in the next verse, why earthly fathers do not sometimes know their own sons either in honour or disgrace.

Verse 22. *But his flesh upon him shall have pain, and his soul within him shall mourn.*

They who expound the former verse of man in the state of death, give the same exposition of this, *his flesh upon him shall have pain, and his soul within him shall mourn, when he is dead*: But hath a dead man pain? or can he mourn? Death is a total privation of all sensitive powers, there's no feeling in the grave. The meaning is either this, he is afflicted while he lives at the thought of what he shall be when he is dead: he grieves that worms should eat him, and that his flesh should corrupt and rot in the earth, What Job speaks (*chap. 21. 23.*) in direct opposition to this point, is yet a clear proof of this interpretation: *He shall be brought to the grave, and remain in the tomb the clods of the valley shall be sweet to him*: Now in the same sense that the clods of the valley are sweet to some dead men, they may be said to be painful unto others. Some are very desirous to die, to such the clods of the valley are sweet, that is, it pleaseth them as much to lie in the grave, as to go to a perfumed bed, or to rest upon a bed of roses; Others are very unwilling to die, to such the grave is a prison of darkness and astonishment. Their living flesh hath pain upon them, while they consider that their dead flesh must consume. Or pain and mourning are here ascribed to dead men, as speech and joy are often in Scripture ascribed to trees, and stones, and cornfields, (liveless insensible or irrational creatures, personating or taking upon them those actions which are proper unto man) by the figure *Prosopopeia*. Intelligo per
prosopopeiam
post mortem
eum Aben. Ex-
ra. Merc.

Secondly, The text may be rendred out of the Hebrew thus, *while his flesh is upon him, he shall have pain, and while his soul is within him, he shall mourn*, that is, he shall be in pain and misery as long as he lives, especially while he lives (as a sick man doth) upon the borders and confines of death. The life of man while he lives in health is painful, but when he is sick and dying he is fuller of pain. A verme super
eo dolebit. Tan. Then his flesh upon him hath pain, and his soul within mourns, he hath sorrow without, and sorrow within, which comprehends all sorts
of

of ſorrow : when the fleſh is pained and the ſoul mourns , what can be added to that pain and mourning ? If the ſpirit be whole it will ſuſtain the infirmities of the body , if the body be whole , it will ſomewhat allay the infirmities of the minde , but when the fleſh is in pain, and the ſoul mourns, natural miſery is compleat : for then all man is in miſery. Fleſh and ſpirit, body and ſoul, are all of man. And in all this *Job* doth not ſpeak his ſpeculation but his experience, He felt what he ſaid, and endured himſelf what he delivered unto others.

I might here draw out obſervations about the troubles of mans life, and the quickneſſe of his ſorrows in the approaches of death. But theſe points have occurred before, and therefore I ſhall not renew any diſcourſe upon them in this place.

Thus I have (through the continued help of Chriſt) finiſhed the commentary of this fourteenth chapter, and of *Jobs* whole answer to the charge of *Zophar*, the laſt of his three friends, and ſo of the whole firſt charge of his three friends , and of his answers to all three. It ſeems they were all unſatisfied in his answers , as much as they were about his perſon : and therefore they begin in order as they began. *Eliphaz* leads the battel a ſecond time , and that more fiercely then before, he ſals upon *Job*, not ſo much with ſtronger arguments as with harder words , rather reprovng then arguing with him , and reprovng him with much heat , if not with ſome bitterneſſe of ſpirit ; As will appear (if the hand of God ſhall leade us yet further) in publiſhing the explication of that his ſecond congreſſe.

F I N I S.